

Dog Diet Do's and Don't's

Dr. Tony Buffington

Your dog's lifestage affects his energy needs.

According to Dr. Tony Buffington, Professor of Clinical Nutrition, Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine, your puppy can be fed a regimen of specific caloric intake compared to his body condition score (BCS), using a simple one to five scale, from overly thin to obese. Using manufacturer feeding recommendations as an initial starting point, feed your puppy to a score of two and maintain this weight until he's fully grown.

Feed whatever amount is necessary to maintain a BCS of two during the growth period, realizing that dogs have varying growth rates and activity levels. Once his adult stature is achieved, you may allow him to reach a score of three.

Feeding during growth & develop habits: Timing and training, watch the dog not the dish!

Body Condition Scoring Chart

1= **Emaciated** - ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all body prominences evident from a distance. No discernible body fat.

Obvious absence of muscle mass.

2 = **Thin** - Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat. Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible. Pelvic bones less prominent. Obvious waist and abdominal tuck.

3 = **Moderate** - Ribs palpable without excess fat covering.

Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side.

4 = **Stout** - General fleshy appearance. Ribs palpable with difficulty.

Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar spine and tail base. Abdominal tuck may be absent.

5 = **Obese** - Large fat deposits over chest, spine and tail base. Waist and abdominal tuck absent. Fat deposits on neck and limbs.

Abdomen distended.

Feeding during Pregnancy and Lactation:

The first 6 weeks of gestation there is no need to change the food intake of the bitch, but do measure her intake! The last 3 weeks of gestation change her food to a "growth" diet. Never use any calcium supplements, this could lead to other problems.

At 30 days gestation she may have a loss of appetite.

During Lactation feed "all she wants" of a high quality diet. Plus feed her multiple meals. It takes 3 calories of food to produce one calorie of milk.

Supplementation: WATER!! 1cup water per 1 cup of dry food. Water and proper food assure adequate milk production.

Feeding the Litter:

Start weaning puppies at 3 weeks of age. Weaning should be complete by 6-8 weeks.

When weaning--the day before, separate the litter from the dam. Feed the litter, but do not feed the dam.

The night before, re unite the litter and dam

Wean: feed the litter growth diet. And feed the dam 1/2 maintenance intake for a day or two.

Preventing Disease:

Increased Calcium causes skeletal lesions

Zinc deficiency causes hyperkeritosis of which the treatment is changing the diet.

Developmental orthopedic diseases

OCD, Hip dysplasia, osteodystrophy.

Risk Factors: Genetics, environment and nutrition

Nutrition: Over consumption, is the most common--excessive weight.

3 Problems nutrition related:

1. Nutrient Sensitive--food allergy, kidney disease..
2. Diet induced--change diet
3. feeding related--change amount fed.

Choosing Food:

Protein is important, as is the ratio of calcium and phosphorus.

Fat is needed for energy density. Most athletes just need more food.

Feeding older dogs:

The last 25% of life span.

Physical signs: loss of sense, decreased activity. Its not so much the age as the mileage. Old age is not a disease. The dogs needs generally decrease as the metabolic rate, with less activity.

1 year old -1200 K Cal/ 60Gms protein

10 year old: 600-800 K Cal 60 Gms protein...the Protein intake is the same! Kidney problems--not the protein, it the phosphorous.

Decrease in Protein Reserve:

1. body weight
2. muscle mass
3. coat quality
4. skin turgor

Choose a diet by intake. Make a food change slowly.

Know how much intake--measure food.

Pet foods should be completely balanced, digestable, palatable and safe..All the nutrients are in proper proportions.