

Alabama Veterinary Allergy and Dermatology Service

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Hypoallergenic Dietary Trial Instructions

Facts

1. Specific foods, preservatives, additives and dyes in your pet's food may cause itchy skin disease when digested.
2. This is not a genetic condition but an acquired disease. Most animals have been ingesting the allergenic food or ingredient for an extended period of time before any problems arise.
3. Dietary sensitivity can occur in animals of all ages and many of these animals show clinical signs of disease non-seasonally or year round.
4. The ingredients in most over the counter, commercial dog foods are similar, which is why we recommend a limited ingredient, novel protein source diet to complete the dietary trial. (ex: rabbit, venison, kangaroo)
5. The digestion and elimination of a specific food and its metabolites may take days to weeks, so an animal may react adversely to an ingested allergen for 3 weeks or longer.
6. It is very important that ***all sources*** of previously fed allergenic substances are eliminated during the dietary trial. One taste of the offending allergen can cause itching in the highly sensitive pet.
7. The only way to accurately diagnose food allergy in your pet is to perform a dietary/food trial. Skin and blood allergy test are available but these tests have been ***proven unreliable*** through various scientific studies.
8. This dietary/food trial will be performed by you and your pet at home, by feeding a novel protein diet a set period of time.
9. This trial has two parts: the cleansing period (8 weeks) and the provocative challenge period (4-6 weeks). Your pet will remain on the novel protein diet through the cleansing period and provocative challenges.
10. Once the provocative challenges are completed, we will be able to recommend a commercially available diet for you pet.

Hypoallergenic Diets

We may recommend a canned and/or dry diet for you pet. We have determined clinically that there are some pets that problems with dry food and do better on canned formulations. If you have a very large pet, we will start the dietary trial with a dry food and transition to a canned food if there is no improvement in a reasonable amount of time. For this dietary trial, your pet will be eating:

Canned: RC ___ Rabbit ___ Venison ___ Lamb **Hills** ___ Rabbit ___ Venison
Dry: RC ___ Rabbit ___ Venison ___ Lamb **Hills** ___ Rabbit ___ Venison ___ Z/D
 Eukanuba ___ KO ___ FP **Purina** ___ HA ___ DM

Important Notice

To avoid stomach upset, mix the old food with the new food (ratio 1:1) for 5-7 days and gradually decrease the old food by 25% every 2 days. After 5-7 days of mixing, feed only the hypoallergenic diet and legal treats for 8 weeks. No treats or table food allowed!!