



Top Foods for Preventing Canine Cancer

Cancer has become a leading cause of death in dogs, afflicting as many as 50 percent of dogs over ten years of age. Diet is a crucial factor in cancer prevention and it's never too early to improve it.

By Deva Khalsa VMD

The National Cancer Institute says emphatically that many cancers can be prevented by making appropriate lifestyle changes. In fact, National Cancer Institute studies show that 35 percent of all human cancers can be attributed to dietary imbalances. An estimated 80 to 90 percent of all cancers are preventable by lifestyle choices.

It's no different for your dog. A healthy diet is the first step toward cancer prevention. Simply avoiding toxins is not enough, as it's important to give your dog the tools to not only dump carcinogens but to also boost the immune system so it can kill any newly created cancer cells.

While you're reading this, the antioxidants in your dog's body are countering the destructive forces of free radicals. His immune system is locating and destroying abnormal cells. His genes are making proteins to repair damage done by carcinogens. These natural processes are helping your dog resist cancer.

The power of green

A recent study conducted by researchers from Oregon State University and published in the journal *Cancer Prevention*, has found that chlorophyll in green vegetables blocks the absorption of intensely carcinogenic aflatoxins (found in many kibbles, especially those containing corn). What this means is that green leafy vegetables and other sources of chlorophyll in your dog's diet will help prevent this carcinogen and others from even entering the bloodstream.

Ethoxyquin, once a commonly used preservative in dog food, is a carcinogen. Consumer outrage brought about significant changes in the way dog food is manufactured today; when dog owners learned that ethoxyquin could promote cancer they wrote letters to manufacturers and government representatives. Consequently,

most pet food manufacturers removed ethoxyquin from dog foods in the early 1990's. But one little known fact is that fish slated for pet food still contains ethoxyquin. While at sea, boat crews are permitted to add it to fish and fishmeal slated for pet food, to prevent spoilage. This does not have to be disclosed on product labeling.

It bears repeating: a diet filled with cancer preventing foods can help the system dump unexpected carcinogens more quickly.

Food as medicine

Research has proven that proper nutritional support with phytochemicals helps prevent cells from developing into malignant cancerous growths. Phytochemicals are organic compounds found in plants. They both prevent and fight disease and have been used as medicines for millennia. When Hippocrates said, "Let food be thy medicine," he probably never imagined his words would be proven in scientific laboratories 2,000 years later.

Kale, once snubbed as a boring vegetable, has become a rising star in the field of cancer prevention. The dark, vibrant greens in kale leaves are rich in carotenoids, which travel throughout our pets' bodies to scavenge free radicals (harmful by-products of cell metabolism in the body) and clean up "after the party." Kale is also rich in elements that reduce the risk of cancer. In 1992, the first cancer-preventing phytochemical in kale was discovered at John Hopkins School of Medicine. Since then, hundreds of powerful phytochemicals have been found. Scientists have learned that the phytonutrients in kale called glucosinolates, cysteine sulfoxides and sulforaphane will quickly clear carcinogenic substances out of cells. In fact, one study found that animals with cancerous tumors that were fed kale had tumors that were smaller and grew more slowly. This kind of research really hits home.

THE POWER OF PHYTOCHEMICALS

Certain phytochemicals help cells dump carcinogens and toxins much more quickly, thus decreasing the potential for permanent DNA damage

Other phytochemicals support more general cell functions

Some phytochemicals give the immune system a super boost



Broccoli contains compounds that inhibit the effect of carcinogens and boost production of cancer blocking enzymes. Cruciferous vegetables, such as cabbage, bok choy, turnips, rutabagas, mustard greens and Brussels sprouts, all contain substances that demonstrate the genuine ability to protect your dog from cancer. Other cancer fighting stars are blueberries and raspberries.

The phytonutrients in superfoods work within the body for a much longer time period than vitamins and minerals do. Organically grown fruits and vegetables give the best benefit because they are far richer in minerals and enzymes. They can be fed raw, lightly steamed or grated and mixed in your dog's food.

Cancer prevention with vitamins

Vitamin D3 has become all the rage, with scientists learning how very important it is for immune function and cancer prevention. Interestingly, Vitamin D3 is a hormone and affects mood. It's thought that one cause for Seasonal Affective Disorder (winter

depression) in people is insufficient Vitamin D3. It's also now thought that dogs are not getting all the D3 they need. I wonder if perhaps the increase in behavioral disorders such as separation anxiety, along with cancer, can in part be attributed to insufficient active D3. Concentrated food sources of Vitamin D include salmon, sardines, shrimp, cod and eggs.

The new kids on the block are the tocotrienols. Tocotrienols are the lesser-known forms of biologically active vitamin E. They're powerful antioxidants and anticancer agents. A study published in a 2008 issue of the *British Journal of Cancer* found that they trigger cancer cell death and block the spread of cancer cells. In another study, published in a 2010 issue of *Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry*, researchers found that tocotrienols also decrease the invasion and spread of cancer cells.

Palm fruit oil contains 46 percent gamma tocotrienols. Palm oil was once prized by the Pharaohs of Egypt as a sacred food. That's because it's one of the world's healthiest oils. It protects against cancer and heart disease, boosts immunity, improves blood sugar control and aids in nutrient, vitamin and mineral absorption. Palm oil also supports healthy liver function and eye, bone and tooth health. In fact, palm oil can affect your pet's health in so many positive ways it can truly be considered a health tonic.

Palm fruit derives its reddish-orange color from beta-carotene, the precursor of vitamin A. It enhances the body's defense system by bolstering the development of helper and natural killer cells, increasing the body's immunity and regenerating cells damaged by infection.

Answers are easily within our reach

The wonder of this planet surrounds us like a shimmering tapestry that endlessly interacts to create and sustain life. This interaction is meticulously planned with numerous support systems placed in strategic positions. I love to think about the beauty of nature and of all of the colors and shapes of the healthy fruits and vegetables we have available to us.

Disease doesn't happen overnight. The beauty is that we do have answers to disease prevention easily within our reach. The time to start your dog on cancer preventing foods and supplements is right now! 🐾



In over 25 years of holistic practice, Dr Khalsa has been incorporating homeopathy, acupuncture, Chinese herbs, nutritional advice, allergy-elimination techniques such as NAET and also JMT into her approach. Dr Khalsa is a Fellow and Professor of the British Institute of Homeopathy and developed a cutting edge preventive supplement at Deserving Pets.

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