

Making Your Pet's Food

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Many pet owners have been searching for alternatives to commercial pet foods due to the pet food recall. Some have turned to the use of homemade diets. These diets should not be used longer than 2 months without switching back to commercial foods or consulting a veterinary clinical nutritionist for a more appropriate set of recipes. Unfortunately, there are many published recipes for dogs and cats that are uniformly unbalanced, and can lead to nutrient deficiencies or excesses. Since most nutrients are inter-related, an excess or deficiency in just one can lead to serious concerns with other nutrients.

Our pets have differing energy requirements on a daily basis. A recipe that states "adequate to feed a 20 lb dog daily" may not provide the appropriate amount of energy and nutrients if the recipe is used long term. Two pets of similar weights and size may have substantially different energy needs. The energy requirements for individual animals can be complicated to calculate and juvenile pets and breeding animals can confuse the equation further. Due to some pets' finicky nature, parts of the home made diet may not be eaten as intended. This could lead to serious health consequences. Owners may make substitutions of major ingredients (protein/carbohydrate), because of their pet's refusal of the diet, or even if the ingredient is not available locally. Substitutions or deletions of major ingredients will unbalance a balanced ration. Due to the time investment, money investment in new equipment and expense of the home made diets, many owners find that cooking for their pets becomes an inconvenience or perhaps impossible.

Be sure to consult with your family veterinarian prior to starting any homemade recipe. He or she knows your pet best and will help you to make the right decision that benefits both you and your pet.

The following is a generic recipe adequate for healthy dogs and cats over 6 months of age for a maximum of 2 months. People are advised to set up a consultation with their veterinarian at the end of this period to revisit feeding requirements and to consider either re-instituting commercial food products, or a consultation with a clinical nutritionist.

1 pound fresh boneless skinless chicken breast
2 and 2/3 cup cooked white rice
1 Tablespoon safflower oil
1/4 tsp Morton's lite salt
1/4 tsp iodinated salt
3 grams of calcium carbonate without vitamin D (regular Tums -
check size)
A multivitamin for dogs or cats (tablet or powder)
1/4 tsp taurine powder (or 500 mg tablet) (taurine is optional for dogs
- essential for cats)

Sauté chopped chicken breast in oil until thoroughly cooked. Add rice
and salt.

Grind Tums (calcium carbonate), multi vitamin/mineral supplement,
and taurine supplement together. Add to cooled mixture. Store in
refrigerator. Larger batches may be prepared in advance and stored
in the freezer.

Nutritional profile

40% protein (Dry matter basis (DMB))

12% fat DMB

6% calcium DMB

4.3% phosphorus

1.4:1.0 calcium:phosphorus

Calories: 1046 kcal per batch or 1.12 kcal/gram

Batch size: 932 grams

To feed, calculate caloric needs and divide into twice daily feeding.
One recipe batch should provide adequate intake for a 40-45 pound
dog for 1 day. Adjust intake to maintain ideal body weight.

Here are a few good websites that can help you cook for your pet.

Petdiets.com

BalancelT.com (owners can generate a recipe that is calculated for
easy use with pre made supplements). During the Pet Food Recall,
BalancelT are offering free maintenance diet recipes for clients with
the promotional code "VIN".

**Recipes formulated from any site should be the starting point
only. Your veterinarian is the best source of advice for your pet.**