

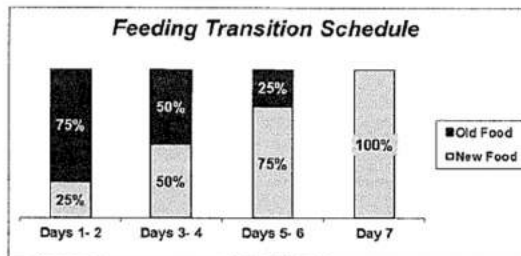


FOOD TRIAL

The only way to confirm a definitive diagnosis of a food allergy is through a food trial; there are no accurate blood or skin tests for food allergies. The food trial's goal is to eliminate all possible offending foods while choosing a novel or hydrolyzed protein diet for a period of 8 weeks (for dogs) or 12 weeks (for cats). At the halfway timepoints, we might only catch 50% of food-allergic pets.

In most patients, there is an intolerance of a protein (ex. beef, poultry, dairy, fish). Over-the-counter limited ingredient diets are not recommended because a study has shown that there can be potential contamination with other proteins. Over-the-counter limited-ingredient grain-free diets are not helpful and may potentially even be harmful (<https://www.fda.gov/animal-veterinary/animal-health-literacy/questions-answers-fda-center-veterinary-medicines-investigation-possible-connection-between-diet-and>).

All other foods or treats need to be eliminated including oral heartworm/flea/tick preventatives (switch to topicals), flavored medications (some antibiotics, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications), fish oils, most chew toys (Nylabones, Greenies, rawhides, bully sticks), most supplements (vitamins, Denamarin), all table foods, and other pet's foods. Cats should be kept indoors to limit hunting. Slowly transition over from the old diet to the new diet by gradually mixing in increasing amounts of the new food over 3-5 days (see chart below). Day 1 of the food trial is when the diet consists of ONLY the new food.



Diets: A prescription is needed for purchase through most online veterinary hospitals and pet pharmacies. We may provide multiple scripts, but please ONLY choose one to fill.

We tend to avoid venison, fish, duck, and lamb due to possible cross-reactions and the common availabilities of the proteins. For young growing pets or pets with concurrent diseases, more specific foods may be recommended. Hydrolyzed means that the protein size is broken down small enough that the immune system shouldn't react to it. **Hydrolyzed** chicken is not used when possible because 10% of chicken-allergic dogs may still be allergic to hydrolyzed chicken.



- Royal Canin HP: dry = hydrolyzed soy, wet (dogs only) = hydrolyzed chicken.
 - Moderate Calorie, Small Dog, Multifunction (urinary, renal, satiety).
 - Label for dry shows chicken fat for flavoring/palatability (acceptable) but NOT chicken protein.
- Royal Canin PR (rabbit): dry or wet.
- Royal Canin Ultamino: hydrolyzed feathers, dry only.
- Purina HA: hydrolyzed soy or chicken (dog), hydrolyzed chicken (cats), wet = hydrolyzed chicken.
- Royal Canin Vegetarian: dry or wet, dogs only.
- Hill's z/d: dry or wet, hydrolyzed chicken.
- Homecooked diets can be considered, but it is difficult to keep the nutrition balanced, especially for long-term and especially for cats. Use of [BalancedIT.com](https://www.balancedit.com) and/or a veterinary nutritionist would be highly recommended.

For the big 3 pet food companies above, if your pet does not find the food palatable, even after opening the bag or case, you can contact the respective company for a full refund (within a reasonable amount of time before expiration).

Treats: You can use the food itself as a treat. Alternatively, you can bake the wet food (if available) into biscuits. There are two types of prescription treats that can be used as an alternative to the food. Over the counter options are listed, but we cannot vouch for the ingredients contained within over-the-counter products (studies have shown possible contaminants of other proteins, which is why we don't use over-the-counter foods for most elimination diets). The more variables included, the more likely the diet will not be strict.



- Royal Canin HP treats: This is a prescription treat (ideally paired only with HP or HA diet – hydrolyzed soy).
- Purina Gentle Snackers: Dogs only. This is a prescription treat (ideally paired only with HP or HA diet – hydrolyzed soy).
Sam's Yarns: <http://www.frontporchpets.com/>
- Rayne's Clinical Nutrition: <http://www.raynenutrition.com/Default.asp> (sweet potato OR apple & pumpkin)
- Make-your-own sweet potato rawhide: <http://www.dogtreatkitchen.com/sweet-potato-dog-chew.html>
- Snook's: <http://www.snookdog.com/> Momo Food: <http://www.momofood.ca/> (ANY vegetarian or vegan dog treat).
- Sweet potato, white potato, carrots, pumpkin, banana: no other ingredients added, can bake or mash.

LESS IDEAL

- Peanut butter: Although peanuts are an uncommon allergen in pets (unlike humans), it is still a different protein. If this is the only way to administer medications, then we often allow this exception.
- Fruits: Oral allergy syndrome has been reported in humans (ex. pollens on the fruits can cross-react), but only 1 case in a dog has been reported (tomato cross-reacting with Japanese cedar). If this is the only way to administer medications, then we often allow this exception.

VIDEO (from the American College of Veterinary Dermatology) <https://vimeo.com/spotmpg/review/260137583/e3e94cca6c>