

15 WAYS TO MAINTAIN YOUR PET'S GUT HEALTH

15 'PAW'SOME TIPS FOR MAINTAINING YOUR PET'S GUT HEALTH

Maintaining your four-legged friends' gut health is essential for their overall well-being. Just like in humans, a healthy gut is crucial for proper digestion, nutrient absorption, and a robust immune system. Read on to explore the best ways to promote and maintain your pet's gut health, which can help them live a happier and healthier life.





1. High-Quality Nutrition

If proper nutrition is the foundation of good gut health for your pet, then feeding them a well-balanced and high-quality diet is paramount.

Choose pet food with real, wholesome ingredients and minimal fillers or artificial additives. Also, look for options that contain a good balance of proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, and minerals, tailored to your pet's specific needs.

Of course, as with any kind of diet change, I recommend consulting your veterinarian before introducing new food to your pet. The doctor will be able to point you in the right direction and recommend foods that are best suited to your pet's breed, age, weight, and more.

2. Probiotics

Although bacteria have garnered a particularly negative reputation for themselves, not all of them are harmful. In fact, good bacteria known as probiotics can help maintain a healthy gut flora. They promote a balanced gut microbiome and aid in the digestion and absorption of nutrients.

You can find probiotic supplements specifically designed for pets or opt for pet foods that include probiotics in their formulations.



3. Prebiotics

Prebiotics are non-digestible fibers that act as food for the beneficial bacteria in your pet's gut. They also help stimulate the growth and activity of these friendly microbes.

If you'd like to introduce prebiotics into your pet's diet, the most natural way is through foods like sweet potatoes, oats, and bananas. You could also use a pet supplement with both prebiotics and probiotics.



4. Fiber-Rich Foods

Fiber is a must for maintaining your pet's gut health. It can aid in digestion, prevent constipation, and support the growth of beneficial gut bacteria.

Incorporate fiber-rich foods such as pumpkin, brown rice, and vegetables like broccoli, peas, and carrots to give your companion a boost in fiber. Just be mindful of portion sizes, as excessive fiber intake can lead to digestive issues.



5. Hydration

Drink up! Proper hydration is another key to supporting a healthy gut in pets. Water is essential for the digestion process and helps move food through the digestive tract.



6. Avoid Overfeeding

As much as we love to treat our fur babies to their favorite food and snacks, it's only good to do this in moderation. Overfeeding your pet can lead to digestive problems and obesity.

That's why it's important to follow feeding guidelines provided by your veterinarian or the pet food manufacturer. You can also avoid overfeeding by measuring your pet's food portions and sticking to a consistent feeding schedule.

7. Rotate Protein Sources

Variety in your pet's diet can be beneficial for gut health. Different protein sources such as chicken, lamb, and beef provide a variety of nutrients and amino acids.

Rotating these protein sources can also help prevent food allergies or sensitivities that may develop with a single protein source over time.

8. Limit Table Scraps

Feeding your pet table scraps is tempting, but it may lead to a slew of digestive issues since human food is often too rich or high in fats for their systems. Some foods can even be toxic to pets including onions, garlic, and grapes. Stick to their regular diet and treats specifically made for pets to help their little tummies perform optimally.



9. Regular Exercise

Physical activity plays a significant role in maintaining your pet's gut and overall health. Not only will exercise help stimulate their digestive system and promote overall well-being, but it's also a great opportunity for you to play together and grow your bond.

Ensure your pet gets enough exercise through daily walks, playtime, and other activities suitable for their age and breed.

10. Stress Management

Stress is a menace when it comes to your pet's gut health. High amounts of it can lead to gastrointestinal problems and other health issues. Provide a safe and comfortable environment for your pet, and be mindful of any factors that may cause them stress.

Regular play, companionship, and relaxation can help reduce stress and maintain a healthy gut. You can also utilize a natural calming aid to help soothe your furry friend's nerves.



11. Prevent Parasites

Parasites such as worms can wreak havoc on your pet's digestive system. If you haven't already, consult with your veterinarian to establish a regular deworming schedule and take preventative measures against parasites such as:

- Removing feces from your yard or other areas your pet frequents
- Performing regular fecal checks with your veterinarian
- Not allowing your pet to drink standing water



12. Regular Vet Check-ups

Regular check-ups with your veterinarian are crucial for monitoring every aspect of your pet's health, including their gut. They can assess your pet's overall well-being, provide guidance on nutrition, and detect any potential issues early on.

It's best to schedule health checkups at least once a year, but if you notice changes in your pet's eating habits, stool, or behavior, consult your vet as soon as possible.

13. Avoid Toxins

Be vigilant about keeping your pet away from potential toxins. Some plants, chemicals, and foods can be harmful if ingested. Always store chemicals and potentially dangerous items out of your pet's reach, and keep a watchful eye on your pets during walks or outdoor playtime.

14. Food Allergy Testing

If you suspect your pet has food allergies or sensitivities, consult with your veterinarian about allergy testing. Identifying and eliminating specific allergens from their diet can greatly improve their gut health and overall quality of life.

15. Gradual Diet Changes

When making dietary changes, especially if switching to a new brand or type of food, do so gradually. Sudden changes can upset your pet's stomach and lead to digestive issues.

Try slowly mixing the new food with their old food over a week to allow their gut to adjust.



PREBIOTICS AND PROBIOTICS FOR PETS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Your pet's digestive tract is one of their body's most important systems. Not only is it responsible for breaking down food and eliminating waste, but it creates and distributes essential nutrients vital to their health and overall well-being.

Maintaining a healthy gastrointestinal tract is one of the best ways to keep your loving companion healthy and happy for years to come, and the use of prebiotics and probiotics for pets is proven for doing just that.

Here is everything you need to know about giving your pets prebiotics and probiotics, when they're necessary, the best types for your companion, and more.



What are Prebiotics and Probiotics

Your pet's gut is home to trillions of bacteria, just like yours. This thriving community within the digestive tract is called a microbiome. The idea of living organisms making themselves at home inside your pet's body may be unsettling, but it's actually very natural, healthy, and necessary. You may already know these tiny organisms as probiotics. These good bacteria keep your pet's gut healthy by maintaining balance inside the digestive system, sending food through the body, and making fundamental vitamins and nutrients.

However, as with any living thing, these bacteria need sustenance to keep them alive and functioning. That's where prebiotics come into play!

Prebiotics are a food source for the bacteria living in the gut. When they're broken down by the probiotics, fatty acids are formed that provide energy for colon cells, help regulate bowel movements, and much more.

The well-being of your pet's gut is essential for their overall health. If they're not getting the nutrients they need from their food, it will have negative effects on their immune system, which could quickly lead to illness.





When Your Pet Needs Them

I strongly believe in the effectiveness of prebiotics and probiotics for pets and will recommend them for my patients that have:

- Upset stomach
- Diarrhea
- Bad gas
- Inconsistent or bad poops
- Anxiety
- Poor skin health
- Recently underwent a course of antibiotics

Prebiotics and probiotics are usually recommended when your furry friend is feeling unwell, but they can also be given as an everyday supplement to stay one step ahead of those pesky illnesses.

By incorporating a prebiotic and probiotic supplement into your pet's everyday intake, you'll be helping their body maintain a healthy level of gut flora while improving digestion and support of the immune system.

If you believe that your pet could benefit from the use of prebiotics and probiotics, consult with your veterinarian first. In rare cases, these supplements could cause unwanted side effects like vomiting and diarrhea.

A vet will be able to help you decide if prebiotics and probiotics will be beneficial for your pet based on their unique health profile.

Is There a Difference Between Prebiotics and Probiotics for Dogs and Cats?

In short, no. The bacteria found in the digestive systems of dogs and cats are essentially the same, but certain bacteria are more beneficial to certain species than others.

Dogs greatly benefit from Bifidobacterium and Lactobacillus Acidophilus. Strains of Enterococcus and Bifidobacterium are especially good for cats.

Whatever prebiotic or probiotic you decide to give your pet, check the label for the bacteria that will be most advantageous to them.

Most importantly, NEVER give your pet prebiotics and probiotics formulated for humans. Our digestive systems require a different amount of bacteria than those of our pets, and giving them our own supplements may cause stomach upsets.

Types of Prebiotics and Probiotics for Pets

Pet formulated prebiotics and probiotics come in many forms, so you'll be able to choose the one your pet will enjoy the most.

Supplements can be given in the form of pills, powders, pastes, and even special treats with all the good stuff hidden inside.

Good bacteria can also be found in certain foods that are safe for our pets to consume such as whole grains, lentils, peas, and most fruits and vegetables. If your pet isn't sensitive to dairy, small amounts of natural, non-flavored yogurt could also be a great option.





What to Look For in Your Pet's Prebiotic and Probiotic

Your pet deserves the best! While you're shopping around for your fur baby's prebiotic and probiotic supplements, here are some important things to keep an eye out for.

Multiple Strains of Probiotics

Each probiotic strain has particular benefits for the microbiome within your pet's digestive system, so choosing a product that offers multiple strains instead of just one is highly recommended.

PAvoid Low-Quality Flavoring

Many prebiotics and probiotics for pets are made with the tasty flavors they love, but this could be disadvantageous.

It's best to steer clear of flavors made with undefined proteins such as "animal digest." Instead, look for single ingredient flavor boosters like beef or chicken liver.

Formatting

While there are several forms of prebiotics and probiotics, science shows that some might be better than others.

Soft chews work great for picky pets since they resemble treats, but they often lose potency after the manufacturing process and exposure to air.

Consider using powders that can be mixed into your pet's food or pills that you can hide within their favorite treats.

Prebiotics and Probiotics Working Together

Since prebiotics require probiotics to perform at their best, choosing a product that includes both is ideal.

That way, you can feel good knowing your four-legged friend is getting everything they need from their prebiotic.

Prebiotics and Probiotics for Pets That I Recommend

As a veterinarian, I was shocked by the low quality of most supplements designed for pets, including prebiotics and probiotics. That's why I teamed up with my best friend to create one of the best organic prebiotics and probiotics for dogs and cats.

Our USDA Organic Probiotics with Prebiotics come in a flavorless powder form and contain 5 billion CFUs per scoop and 12 live powerful strains of living good bacteria.

They're also 100% vegan, grain-free, and crafted without soy, corn, dairy, artificial dyes, or preservatives. We're confident it will help maintain your pet's proper gut flora while providing a multitude of other benefits such as healthier skin and improved immune response.

