Eating Healthy!

Dogs need a balanced diet just like people. A good diet for your dog balances energy, protein, fat, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals. The amount and type of food that your dog needs is based on many factors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>puppy, adult, senior</td>
<td>Dogs between one and seven years old are most at risk for obesity. Proper nutrition and exercise is important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breed</td>
<td>Chihuahua vs. Great Dane</td>
<td>Some breeds have a greater risk of obesity or medical conditions that can be managed with proper nutrition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuter Status</td>
<td>neutered or intact male/female</td>
<td>Obesity is more frequently a problem in neutered dogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body Condition</td>
<td>underweight, healthy weight, overweight, obese</td>
<td>Body condition is one factor used to determine health status and therefore portion size.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifestyle</td>
<td>kenneled, lap dog, working dog, athlete, breeding dog</td>
<td>Active dogs such as working dogs and athletes need more energy than dogs that like to sleep on the sofa all day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>indoor vs. outdoor, climate</td>
<td>More energy is required if dogs live outdoors in cold climates. More water but not as much energy is needed if dogs live in hot environments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Conditions</td>
<td>diabetes, kidney problems</td>
<td>Medical conditions can require a special diet. Prescription pet foods are available in some cases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Team Up!
Your veterinarian can help with:
- Selecting a healthy feeding and exercise strategy for your dog
- Ensuring that your dog has no medical conditions that would restrict diet or exercise

Know Your Doggie’s Diet
Here are a few questions that your veterinarian might ask before recommending the best nutrition plan:
- Who feeds your dog?
- What kind of dog food do you feed? Commercial (brand) or homemade (bring recipes)? Dry or moist?
- How often and what kinds of treats, snacks, vitamins, or other supplements do you give your dog?
- How often does your dog get table food?
- Do you feed your dog set meals? If yes, how much food is in each meal?
- Do you measure the amount of food given? If yes, what do you use?
- Does your dog have access to food all day? Can your dog access the food of other animals?
- Does your dog have access to other food sources? Is your dog unsupervised outdoors?
- Have there been any changes recently? Types of food? Eating more or less food? Becoming a picky eater? Stress and medical conditions can sometimes affect your dog’s eating habits.

References and Resources:
Author: Dr. Sandy San Miguel, Purdue Veterinary Medicine (PVM)
Designer: Thad Blossom, PVM
Reviewers: Dr. Nolie Parnell, PVM and Dr. Karen Zott, College of Health and Human Sciences

The project described is supported by a Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA) from the Office of Research Infrastructure Programs (ORIP), a component of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).
NIH . . . Turning Discovery Into Health
Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of ORIP or NIH.