

DR. ALICE VILLALOBOS  
ANIMAL ONCOLOGY CONSULTATION SERVICES  
20051-I VENTURA BLVD., WOODLAND HILLS, CA 91364  
PHONE: 818-712-0060                           FAX: 818-704-0323

**Suggestions for Feeding Immunonutrition  
Supplements to Pets**

Administering the supplements that are recommended for immunonutrition will enhance your pet's immune system. This is an important aspect to consider for the total (holistic) treatment of pets with cancer. Many pets accept all the supplements placed in their meals. But it is not unusual for pets to decline some of the powders, capsules or tablets that are placed or mixed in their normal food. Feeding supplements to a reluctant pet may become both challenging and frustrating. If giving the supplements at mealtime becomes a battle and causes stress, mistrust and food aversion, we must change the approach. We truly want our pet patients and families to enjoy a good relationship and a high quality of life that is upbeat and positive. This article will help you find a successful technique.

The most important suggestion is to identify the offending supplement(s). Do a taste test for each supplement separately by placing it in a small amount of wet food and see if your pet will eat it. Then delete the offending supplement from future. Try giving the offending supplement in a special, more delicious treat. Be sure to explore various methods before giving up. You should discover a successful technique if you try all of the following suggestions. Don't give up too soon! Be upbeat & coaxing and never angry!

**Hotdog method:**

Many pets readily accept powders, pills or capsules stuffed into hotdogs, vienna sausage, or bratwurst.

**Broth method:**

Some accept their supplements mixed in beef or chicken broth or gravy. If this is refused, you may have to syringe feed the mixture to your pet.

**Meatball method:**

Some pets will eagerly eat anything disguised into a meatball type of treat. Suggested items include lunchmeat (turkey or roast beef) and liverwurst. Flatten them onto your counter then pour powders, capsules, and pills into the middle of the selected meat. Roll up the chosen meat until you have the supplements hidden deeply inside.

**Peanut butter, cream cheese, ice cream method:**

Some pets enjoy their pills and capsules disguised in a ball of peanut butter or cream cheese. You may also find success using ice cream.

**Syringe method:**

Some pets may need to have all supplements mixed into a liquid or paste and then syringed into the mouth. Be sure to put everything together to minimize sessions!

**For pets that refuse capsules or pills:** Empty the contents of IP-6 capsules into saline or slightly salty water and syringe feed on an empty stomach. For pets that are very sick, crush pills and mix with honey and rub it on the lips. Mix crushed pills and the contents of capsules into yogurt; baby food, gravy, bratwurst, cream cheese, salmon or tuna mousse or baby food or a/d food diluted with water for syringe feeding the mixture.

## **FEEDING**

As your pet undergoes cancer therapy, the normal diet may not seem appetizing or suitable any longer. It may be necessary to “spoil” your pet with different foods. Below are some suggested food items to try if your pet develops an aversion to the regular diet. Also included are diets for good health, diets for gastrointestinal discomfort, and snack suggestions. Remember, some pets develop food aversion if they don’t like the taste of the supplements that are mixed into the food. You may need to give the entire immunonutrition program separate from meals to be successful.

### **Regular Diets:**

For cancer patients we suggest a low carbohydrate diet, following the concept that cancer cells readily use sugar. We suggest using canned food in preference to dry foods. Use high quality store brand diets or prescription diets. If your pet prefers dry food, choose a line of no grain dry food. If you are able to incorporate whole fresh foods like chicken, fish, cottage cheese, canned pumpkin, dark green leafy vegetables into their meals, that is a very healthy approach to the best nutrition possible while their immune systems work hard to fight their disease. If your pet does not enjoy eating green vegetables whole, you can put the cooked green vegetables into a blender with some chicken broth and make a slurry. Then adding several tablespoons of the green slurry into your pet’s regular food each meal can help your pet get their “green” nutrition much easier.

### **Gastrointestinal Diets:**

If your pet has problems such as vomiting, diarrhea, or nausea, you need to give a bland diet. Suggested foods include boiled hamburger or chicken, boiled barley, millet, brown rice. You may also use canned pumpkin, cottage cheese, plain yogurt and mashed potatoes with chicken broth and butter. Proportions of meat to carbohydrate should be equal. Feed the pet small meals frequently until normal intestinal function returns.

### **Snacks:**

Try to keep your pet on a low carbohydrate diet. This includes snacks. Suggested snacks include frozen fish fillets (not breaded) turkey and other lunchmeats cut into bite sized slices, meatballs, meatloaf, chicken and other meats cut into small pieces.

## **EXERCISE**

With few exceptions, your pet should be able to enjoy life and participate in routine exercise. Follow your pet’s lead for normal walks, jogging, or hikes. If he/she seems sluggish or less enthusiastic, then skip or modify the exercise to accommodate your pet’s level of energy. Be observant during exercise in case your pet becomes compromised.

Most importantly, show your pet your love and treasure the wellness of each day. As a team, we are working together with you to slow cancer’s velocity with special treatments. Together, we must always focus on maintaining a good QUALITY OF LIFE for your pet.