UCDAVIS VETERINARY MEDICINE

Nutrition Support Service

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Treat guidelines for dogs

Treats and additional food items should not exceed 10% of the daily caloric intake. The majority (90% or greater) of the calories should come from a complete and balanced food (i.e. a dog's maintenance or therapeutic commercial diet OR a home-cooked diet formulated by a veterinary nutritionist specifically for your pet). For example, if your dog eats 100 Calories per day, NO MORE than 10 Calories should be from treats or other foods (with 90 Calories from a complete and balanced diet).

Fruits and vegetables are good options for many dogs since they are usually low on protein, fat, sodium, and phosphorus. Please avoid food items known to be harmful to dogs, including chocolate, macadamia nuts, garlic, onions, grapes, and raisins. Additionally, the FDA has released a warning regarding the use of commercial jerky pet treats; for a summary of this issue see:
http://www.fda.gov/animalveterinary/safetyhealth/productsafetyinformation/ucm319463.htm

Caloric content and other nutritional information for human food items at the USDA National Nutrient Database are available online:
http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search/

Please discuss with your veterinarian whether specific treats are appropriate for your individual pet, since some items may not be ideal under certain circumstances.

Examples of treats are:

50 grams of raw baby carrots provide 18 kcal
78 grams (1/2 cup) of boiled carrots provide 27 kcal
180 grams (3/4 cup) of boiled summer squash (zucchini) provide 28 kcal
51 grams (1/4 cup cubed) baked butternut squash provide 21 kcal
90 grams (1/2 cup) boiled spinach provide 21 kcal
63 grams (1/2 cup) boiled green beans provide 22 kcal

31 grams (1/4 cup chopped) raw apple with skin provide 14-16 kcal
76 grams (1/2 cup of diced) watermelon provide 23 kcal
35 grams (1/4 cup of sliced) raw pear provide 20 kcal
1/4 cup of sliced raw peaches with peel provide 18 kcal
44 grams (1/4 cup of balled) honeydew melon provide 16 kcal

12 grams (1 medium) strawberry provide 4 kcal
43 grams (~1/4 cup sliced) strawberry provide 14 kcal
28 grams (1/8 cup, mashed) banana provide 25 kcal
34 grams (1/4 of a large 8"-9") banana provide 30 kcal

1 tablespoon of applesauce provides 6 kcal
10 miniature marshmallows provide 22 kcal
1 teaspoon of honey provides 21 kcal
1/2 cup air-popped popcorn (no salt or butter) provides 16 kcal