



California **Veterinary Specialists**

Special Care From the Heart

Nutritional Support of Your Pet with Cancer

Good nutrition goes hand in hand with quality of life. Indeed, good nutritional support has been shown in people and in animals to not only improve quality of life but also length of life by enhancing the beneficial effects of surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy while at the same time reducing the side effects of these therapies. You can play a key role in enhancing your pet's quality of life by providing good nutritional support.

The first question many people ask is, "What do I feed my pet with cancer?" The answer is quite simple: anything your pet will eat! But if your pet will eat, then you and your veterinarian should develop a dietary plan that will benefit your special pet. Although the ideal cancer diet for the pet is not known, there are some simple concepts that can be followed:

- Provide a diet with good aroma and taste.
- Minimize simple carbohydrates (starches and sugars).
- Provide a diet that has high-quality protein sources (meat, fish).
- Whenever possible, consider enhancing the levels of n-3 fatty acids such as algae-based (or fish-based) docosahexaenoic acid (DHA).



Carlsbad 760-431-2273 2310 Faraday Ave., Carlsbad, CA 92008
Murrieta 951-600-9803 39809 Avenida Acacias, Suite E, Murrieta, CA 92563
Ontario 909-947-3600 2409 S. Vineyard Ave. Suite O, Ontario, CA 91761



California **Veterinary Specialists**

Special Care From the Heart

A big challenge for pets with cancer is the prevention and treatment of a finicky appetite. Several steps can be taken, including:

- Provide a variety of fresh foods that are very delicious and good smelling. Warming the food to just below body temperature can enhance the appeal of many foods.
- Work with your veterinary health care team to prevent and treat any discomfort. Your pet will have a better appetite when there is no discomfort.
- Work with your veterinary health care team to prevent and treat nausea.
- Work with your veterinary health care team to prevent and treat dehydration. A dehydrated pet often has a poor appetite.
- When the above has not worked, consider the addition of appetite stimulants as prescribed by your veterinarian.
- Do not change the diet at the same time as chemotherapy or other drugs are administered if these drugs have the chance of causing nausea. This results in “food aversion,” in which your pet may associate the uncomfortable feeling with the food rather than the true culprit, chemotherapy or other drugs or procedures.



Carlsbad 760-431-2273 2310 Faraday Ave., Carlsbad, CA 92008
Murrieta 951-600-9803 39809 Avenida Acacias, Suite E, Murrieta, CA 92563
Ontario 909-947-3600 2409 S. Vineyard Ave. Suite O, Ontario, CA 91761



California **Veterinary Specialists**

Special Care From the Heart

When oral intake is not possible, assisted tube feeding is a great option to enhance both quality and length of life. This method also ensures that you can give medicines, fluids, and nutrition without worrying if your pet will eat or not. Assisted tube feeding is the placement of a small tube into the esophagus (in the neck), stomach (gastrostomy tube), or intestine (jejunostomy tube) to allow the nonpainful administration of food, water, and medicine. The key is to begin this assisted tube feeding before significant weight loss is observed. These assisted tubes feeding techniques should be considered as a great way of preventing any decline in your pet's health and should be used early in the course of your pet's disease. You must be an advocate for your pet: Don't hesitate to contact your veterinary health care team to discuss the importance of nutritional care of your pet.

The Internet and other sources of information are brimming with promises of the health benefits of a wide variety of dietary supplements. Most are unfounded and unproven, but your veterinary health care team welcomes discussion of any treatments that may help your pet. We strongly urge you to discuss any and all treatments and supplements with your veterinarian before you administer them.



Carlsbad 760-431-2273 2310 Faraday Ave., Carlsbad, CA 92008
Murrieta 951-600-9803 39809 Avenida Acacias, Suite E, Murrieta, CA 92563
Ontario 909-947-3600 2409 S. Vineyard Ave. Suite O, Ontario, CA 91761



California **Veterinary Specialists**

Special Care From the Heart

A commercially available diet for pets with cancer exists and is called Hills Prescription Diet n/d. Alternatively, a homemade diet can be made, as outlined below.

Homemade Canine Cancer Food

This is a balanced homemade formula for pets with cancer. The following recipe will make 3 days' worth of food for a 25- to 30-pound pet.

Ingredients	Amount
Chicken or Turkey, cooked	454 grams (1 pound)
Whole bown rice, cooked	227 grams (1 1/3 cups)
Liver, beef	138 grams (1/3 pound)
Vegetable oil	63 grams (4 1/2 Tbs)
docosahexaenoic acid	5 grams
Calcium carbonate	3.3 grams**
Dicalcium phosphate***	2.9 grams (3/4 tsp)
Salt substitute (potassium chloride)	1.9 grams (1/3 tsp)

* Note: Fish oil or, preferably, algae-based DHA should be added.

** Calcium carbonate is available as oyster shell calcium tablets or Tums tablets



Carlsbad 760-431-2273 2310 Faraday Ave., Carlsbad, CA 92008
Murrieta 951-600-9803 39809 Avenida Acacias, Suite E, Murrieta, CA 92563
Ontario 909-947-3600 2409 S. Vineyard Ave. Suite O, Ontario, CA 91761



California **Veterinary Specialists**

Special Care From the Heart

(0.5 g regular Tums, 0.75 g Tums Extra, or 1.0 g Tums Ultra).

*** Bone meal can be used in place of dicalcium phosphate.

Directions

Cook the rice with salt substitute added to the water. Cook the fish, turkey or chicken and drain the fat. Cook the liver and dice or finely chop into small pieces. Pulverize the calcium carbonate and vitamin/mineral tablets. Mix the vegetable oil, fish oil (break open capsules) and supplements with the rice and then add the cooked ground beef and liver. Mix well, cover and refrigerate. Feed approximately one-third of this mixture each day to a 25- to 30-pound pet. Palatability will be increased if the daily portion is heated to approximately body temperature (Caution: when using microwave, avoid "hot spots," which can burn the mouth.)

Nutrient Profile (% dry matter basis)

Protein	35.3
Fat	41.6
Carbohydrate	17.8
Calcium	0.65
Phosphorus	0.54



Carlsbad 760-431-2273 2310 Faraday Ave., Carlsbad, CA 92008
Murrieta 951-600-9803 39809 Avenida Acacias, Suite E, Murrieta, CA 92563
Ontario 909-947-3600 2409 S. Vineyard Ave. Suite O, Ontario, CA 91761



California **Veterinary Specialists**

Special Care From the Heart

Sodium 0.36

Potassium 0.68

Magnesium 0.05

Energy 1,989 kcal/kg as fed



Carlsbad 760-431-2273 2310 Faraday Ave., Carlsbad, CA 92008
Murrieta 951-600-9803 39809 Avenida Acacias, Suite E, Murrieta, CA 92563
Ontario 909-947-3600 2409 S. Vineyard Ave. Suite O, Ontario, CA 91761