

Cook Salmon Before Feeding to Dogs

Pacific Northwest salmon should be cooked to help prevent transmission of bacteria to dogs.

By Jon Geller, DVM

Q. Shadow is a 2-year-old Siberian Husky-German Shepherd Dog mix. We were watching a vet show on TV, and he said that you should never feed your dog fish. No reason given. We give Shadow salmon for two days, meat for two days, chicken for two days, then tuna for two days. These are small quantities mixed with brown rice and Beneful kibble. Are we hurting her?

A. Raw fish, especially salmon and trout, can transmit nasty bacteria and parasites that can migrate throughout your dog's body, occasionally causing serious infections.

Salmon poisoning only occurs in the Pacific Northwest, where you live. Therefore, you should cook the fish first, and combine it with other food as you are doing. Salmon probably provides many of the same benefits for dogs' skin and general health as it does for humans.

If your dog does get Salmon poisoning, you might see signs such as vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite, and lethargy. The diagnosis is made by looking at fecal material under a microscope, and identifying flukes, a manta-ray-shaped organism.

Treatment consists of an antibiotic, which is usually effective in clearing the organism.

Animal shows on TV and some Websites, although entertaining, may not always provide accurate information.