

Natural Wellness

Nature's Remedies: A guide to health-enhancing supplements

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When used properly, supplements can provide a complete, wholesome nutritional balance, which helps the canine immune system remain healthy and resist disease. By optimizing the balance between the biochemical, molecular and tissue functions of the body, supplements can help prevent inflammation and infection, offer resistance to cancer, and reduce emotional and physiological stresses that affect behavior.

Before using any supplements, consult your veterinarian and have your dog thoroughly examined, including laboratory tests, as appropriate.

Balancing the immune system

Vitamins A and E have been shown to enhance immune function. Vitamin A can beneficially influence thymus-gland responses; vitamin E is known to improve both cellular and humoral immunity (the body's circulating immunity, which can be measured as immunoglobulin levels in the blood), by enhancing the functions of both tissue and circulating immune responses. Dietary carotenoids (orange, red and green-colored nutrients), especially lutein and beta-carotene, have been reported to modulate both cellular and humoral immunity in dogs. These probiotic products are especially useful for treating the gastrointestinal inflammation that leads to "leaky gut syndrome," which occurs when the bowel is inflamed or injured, and becomes porous.

Antioxidants are thought to help protect the body against the damaging effects of free radicals (portions of molecules that detach and can move within the body causing inflammation and harm) and chronic diseases associated with the aging process, such as skin cancers, osteoarthritis, chronic inflammatory bowel syndrome, muscle degeneration, and memory loss, to name a few.

Fresh fruits, including blueberries, and vegetables contain many of these naturally occurring antioxidants, such as vitamins C and E. Blueberries are among the fruits with the highest antioxidant properties.

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