

Customize Your Puppy's Diet

Expert advice for feeding your new puppy a healthy diet.

Farrell R. Clancy

How Much and How Often?

Once you've chosen a brand of food, how much and how often should you feed? Nichol says the feeding guidelines printed on the label are usually very general and based on laboratory situations. "Like people, each pup is an individual, with a different metabolic rate," Nichol says. Ask your veterinarian for advice about how much food to feed your puppy. Generally, puppies should eat small amounts about four times daily until 12 weeks of age, then three times daily.

When your Pup Grows Up

Owner, breeder and exhibitor of Yorkshire Terriers, Shumsky reminds us that toy breeds reach their full size at 6 months, but a large or giant breed, such as a Great Dane, may not be considered an adult until it is 1 to 2 years old. Therefore, you'll want to consider your pup's size and breed before making the switch from a puppy ("growth") formula to an adult ("maintenance") formula. Talk with your veterinarian to determine the best age for your puppy to make the switch to adult food.

By following the advice of our nutritional experts, doing some research before selecting a brand of food that works for your puppy, taking steps to prevent obesity and maintaining a good relationship with your veterinarian, you can help raise a happy, healthy dog. I'm sure you'll receive many licks, snuggles and wags as thanks.