

For Your Boston Terrier

Our user-friendly nutrition guide will help your Boston maintain optimum health through better nutrition.

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Dog Nutrition 101 Did you know dogs require a balanced blend of over 40 separate nutrients in their diet? How many can you name? If your list is a few items short of 40, don't worry. You'll find decades of research by universities and pet-food manufacturers handily condensed into the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) published nutrient profiles for dogs. You can find nutrition that fits these criteria in every bag or can of dog food that carries a complete and balanced claim on the label. Each year, new research sheds light on how we can improve our dogs health even further through nutrition. But the pet food market in the United States alone amounts to millions of dollars in sales, so manufacturers work hard on marketing tactics to make their brand more appealing to you, the person shelling out all those bucks.

How will you sort through fact and advertising gimmicks to make the best decision on what to feed your Boston? Lets start with the basics, then well cover issues of special concern to the Boston Terrier breed.

Boston Bits Dry diets remain the most popular, for sheer conveniences sake, especially for owners with multiple dogs to feed. But not all dry diets are created equal, nor digested well, by Bostons.

Bostons seem to need a higher quality food, says Kathryn Graves, Ph.D., assistant research professor at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, who has raised Boston Terriers at her Katbird kennel for 17 years. They seem to be more sensitive to poor-quality ingredients, and grain-based diets, says Dr. Graves, who is a member of the Boston Terrier Club of America (BTCA) health committee. Dr. Graves recommends meat-based diets. I don't just look at the percentage of crude protein (listed in the guaranteed analysis portion of dog food labels), she says. I want to see where the protein is coming from.

Diets listing meat as the first ingredient contain more meat by weight than any other ingredient. Dr. Graves avoids diets listing meat by-products, which include organ meats. We live in an environment that is not as clean and wholesome as when dogs evolved to eat every part of their prey. Food animals are exposed to antibiotics, hormones and chemicals in the environment, and the liver is where all these things are gathered and detoxified, Dr. Graves explains.