

## Balancing the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel

**Feeding your cavalier the optimum amount of a nutritious food is essential to its health.**

*Karla S. Rugh*

When it comes to food, your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel cares about just one thing: taste. You want your Cavaliers food to taste good, of course, but you also want it to provide all the nutrition your buddy needs. Fortunately, its not difficult to find a dog food that'll keep both of you happy, as long as you know what to look for.

**Nutrient Necessities** Your Cavalier needs proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, and minerals for optimal growth and health. Proteins are used for the growth and repair of muscles, bones and other body tissues. They're also used to produce antibodies, enzymes and hormones.

Carbohydrates are metabolized into glucose, the bodys principal energy source. Fats are used for energy when glucose is unavailable, and are important for hormone production, nervous system function and vitamin transport. Vitamins and minerals participate in muscle and nerve function, bone growth, healing, metabolism and fluid balance.

Your Cavalier also needs an unlimited supply of fresh, clean water--at least 1 ounce of water per pound of body weight each day, even during cold weather. Hot weather (above 80 degrees Fahrenheit) or vigorous exercise can double or even triple that requirement.

Standard Fare Dry food is the least-expensive commercially available dog food. Its bulky and takes longer to eat than other foods, so your Cavalier may feel fuller after a meal. The crunchiness of unmoistened dry food promotes dental health by reducing plaque accumulation and massaging the gums.

Canned food is more expensive than dry food, but this isn't a major concern with small dogs such as Cavaliers. Its palatability and concentrated energy make it a good choice for underweight dogs or those recovering from illness. Some owners add a bit of canned food to dry food to increase its palatability. Canned food can also be used to make nutritious, tasty treats.

The advantages of frozen food are similar to those of canned products, although frozen food is usually more expensive than canned. Unlike other forms of dog food, frozen food is available in both cooked and raw forms.