

## Onions in Small Amounts Safely Enhance Flavor

**An expert answers questions on canine healthcare.**

*Michael Abdella, DVM*

Posted: Thu Jul 6 00:00:00 PDT 2000

Q: I've figured out on my own that onions are bad for dogs and I don't give them to my dog. Why then are onion and garlic powders added to canned dog food? I know they add flavor, but aren't they bad for dogs? I've noticed spices are added in varying amounts [according to] their placement in the list of ingredients. Sometimes they are among the first ingredients listed - meaning a substantial amount is added. Wouldn't there be a cumulative effect with repeated feedings? Are mushrooms bad for dogs?

A: Onions and onion powder can be toxic to dogs, but small quantities are harmless. A cumulative effect is not a concern, because onion powder does not build up in the dog's system.

Small amounts of onion and garlic enhance food flavor. An ingredient's position in the ingredient list indicates its amount relative to other items; it has little to do with the total amount.

Mushrooms safe for human consumption are also safe for dogs. However, mushrooms growing in the wild or in the yard can be toxic.