

What Are Supplements?

The holistic health approach shares many aspects of traditional medicine.

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Supplements are, as their name implies, things that are added to a diet to increase the diet's nutritional value to the dog. Shawn Messonnier, DVM, author of *Natural Health Bible for Dogs & Cats* (Prima, 2001) says, "There is no one supplement that is perfect for every pet or condition." He says the best supplements are cost effective, easy to give, do what they are supposed to do, and are free of side effects.

Some supplements recommended by experts include:

Green foods (such as spirulina, blue-green algae, and wheat grass): These contain phytonutrients which are powerful antioxidants.

Omega-3 fatty acids: These are found in fish oil, help combat inflammation, and have numerous other health benefits.

Probiotics: These are viable bacteria that help digestion and the metabolization of food. Yogurt and acidophilus are two sources.

Vitamin and mineral supplements: These should be made from whole foods rather than synthetic and will help prevent deficiencies in the diet.

Discuss any supplements with your veterinarian before adding them to your dog's diet.

Interested in reading more about approaching your dog's health holistically? Go to www.dogworld.com to check out Dog World magazine's latest news and information in dogdom.