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## **Feeding a Pet with Heart Disease**

The purpose of a special diet for your pet is the same as it is with human patients- to provide foods containing only very small amounts of sodium (salt). Sodium tends to make the body retain water, and this can be harmful in a heart patient. Most commercial pet foods are well balanced and nutritious for normal dogs, but contain too much sodium for the heart patient. Since the low-sodium diet can extend your pet's life and decrease the heart medications needed, it is best to feed your pet accordingly.

### **There are two approaches to feeding:**

Use a specially prepared canned product recommended by your veterinarian. Formulate a low-sodium diet to prepare at home.

*Occasionally pets will not eat anything other than foods they are accustomed to eating. You should still try to encourage him to try the new diet; if need be, you can mix small amounts of the regular diet- this is not perfect, but it does somewhat lower the daily sodium intake.*

### **General guidelines:**

- Use NO salts in food or cooking.
- Milk products are generally HIGH in sodium.
- Canned, frozen or prepared pet foods are HIGH in sodium.
- Fresh meats are normally LOW in sodium.
- All shellfish and prepared fish are usually HIGH in sodium.
- The MAXIMUM sodium intake should be 6 mg/pound body weight.
- An average daily intake of 30-40 calories/pound body weight is desired.

### **Foods high in sodium- Not allowable:**

- Cereals- All, except puffed wheat (all brands).
- Snacks- Milk, sherbert, ice cream, puddings, jello, salted crackers.
- Meat, fish, poultry- Luncheon meats, frankfurters, dried beef, sausage, brains, kidney.
- Cheese and milk- All, except unsalted cottage cheese or low-sodium cheddar.
- Fats- salted butter or margarine. Fat from salted meats.
- Vegetables- All canned types, unless it is "salt free."
- Seasoning- All mixed salts.
- Miscellaneous- All salted nuts, potato chips, pretzels, olives, pickles, molasses, brown sugar, peanut butter, candy or glazed fruits.

The mainstays of a good low sodium diet may be fresh beef, pork or chicken along with a bland macaroni and/or low sodium content vegetables. Do NOT give a dog "snacks."

A good diet is ¼ pound ground round or other lean beef, 2 cups cooked white rice without salt, 1 tablespoon vegetable oil, one Pet-Cal supplement tablet. Cook beef in skillet, retaining fat, and stir until lightly browned. Add remaining ingredients and mix well. Keep covered in refrigerator. Feed 1/3-1/2 pound for each 10 pounds of body weight daily.