
UNDERSTANDING
YOUR DOG'S
FOOD ALLERGIES



 **PURINA**
PRO PLAN
VETERINARY DIETS



Your Pet, Our Passion.®

What are food allergies?

In this leaflet we will help you to recognise the common signs of a food allergy and explain why diet plays such an important role in the diagnosis and management of food allergies. We will explain how you can feed a clinically proven diet designed to help reduce food allergies and help to improve your dog's quality of life.

Just like in humans, some dogs are more sensitive than others and may also suffer from allergies.

Although sneezing and eye irritation are common signs of allergies in humans, **in dogs allergies more commonly cause skin irritation and itching, and/or intestinal upsets such as diarrhoea.** A food allergy occurs when the immune system reacts abnormally (over-reacts) to the presence of an ingredient – usually a protein - in the diet. Food allergies can develop at any age, but the majority of dogs are under 3 years old when diagnosed. Any breed of dog can develop a food allergy. It may take a number of months or years for a dog's immune system to become sensitised to a protein – most dogs won't have a reaction the first time they eat something, so it can be difficult to make the connection back to their food later on when trying to investigate the potential cause of a dog's skin or gastrointestinal signs.

Food allergy or food intolerance?

Food allergies and intolerances can have similar clinical signs and may be challenging to differentiate. However, they have different underlying mechanisms:

A food allergy involves an over-reaction of the immune system. The immune response is normally responsible for defending the body against foreign organisms such as viruses and bacteria. However, sometimes a harmless substance, such as a protein in food, is accidentally recognised as harmful by the immune system and an allergy develops.

A food intolerance is different to a food allergy as it does not involve the immune system. Food intolerances occur when a dog has an inability or reduced ability to digest a particular nutrient in the food. Some dogs (and people) cannot, for example, digest lactose (the sugar in milk). This can result in diarrhoea if too much milk is drunk, but this adverse reaction occurs without any involvement of the immune system.

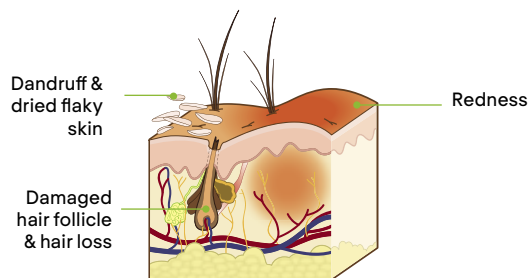
What are the signs of food allergy?

The signs associated with food allergies tend to occur all year round (unlike allergies to pollens or flea bites which are often worse in the summer), and involve either the skin or the digestive system, or both.

Skin signs include:

- Itching (especially of the ears, face, feet, tail, and abdomen)
- Skin redness
- Nibbling or licking of the paws
- Secondary skin infections caused by the dog damaging their skin by scratching

The skin of a dog with food allergy



Gastrointestinal signs include:

- Flatulence
- Persistent vomiting
- Persistent diarrhoea
- Weight loss

None of these signs are specific for food allergies and can be seen as a result of a variety of other underlying causes. Your vet is likely to suggest various additional investigations to try to find out what is causing your dog's symptoms.

How does your vet diagnose food allergies?

Diagnosing whether your dog has a true food allergy can be difficult. To diagnose a food allergy your vet may suggest a diet trial. This is usually where a special food is given for a specific period of time, as a test to see if your dog's symptoms improve. This is also known as an 'elimination diet trial'.

PURINA® PRO PLAN® VETERINARY DIETS CANINE HA Hypoallergenic™ is a diet designed with a single hydrolysed protein and purified carbohydrate sources (so the carbohydrates have negligible intact proteins in them). When a diet is hydrolysed, the proteins in it are broken down to a tiny size so the immune system doesn't recognise and therefore react to them.

In some cases, it can take a long time for symptoms to resolve so the trial could last for over 2 months. It is important that your dog is not fed anything else in this time. Treats, human food and even some flavoured medications can contain proteins that might cause a reaction, interfering with the diet trial.

Usually you should start to see improvements in any gastrointestinal signs within 2-3 weeks and improvements in any skin signs within 6-8 weeks, though there may not be full resolution during this time. If the signs do improve and resolve, it is highly likely that your dog has an underlying food allergy or intolerance. This can be confirmed, if desired, by re-feeding the original food to see if the signs reoccur.

Long-term management of your dog's food allergy

Long-term control of signs in a dog with a food allergy relies on continued avoidance of the food or ingredient to which the dog is allergic. As **PURINA® PRO PLAN® VETERINARY DIETS CANINE HA Hypoallergenic™** is a complete and balanced food for maintenance and growth, it can be used as a new permanent diet for your adult dog or your puppy.

Benefits of feeding CANINE HA Hypoallergenic™ to your dog:

HYDROLYSED



Single hydrolysed protein
Broken down into tiny components, to help avoid allergic responses

PURIFIED CARB



Purified carbohydrates
To help avoid allergic responses

OMEGA 3



With omega-3 fatty acids
To help maximise the natural anti-inflammatory processes in the skin

Your vet may also recommend **PURINA® PRO PLAN® VETERINARY DIETS CANINE DRM Dermatitis™** to help manage your dog's food allergy. This diet has a limited number of protein sources to help minimise food responses. Your vet may recommend this diet as a possible 'challenge' diet after an elimination diet trial. It is also suitable for the support of skin function in the case of skin disease or excessive loss of hair.



Feeding guidelines for CANINE HA Hypoallergenic™

There are two feeding guidelines available for CANINE HA Hypoallergenic™, one for adult dogs and one for puppies. Your vet will guide you with the amount of CANINE HA Hypoallergenic™ to feed. Feeding guidelines can also be found on the PRO PLAN® website. You may need to adjust the amount fed to maintain your dog's optimal weight which is influenced by factors such as environment, activity, body condition and breed. Provide fresh water in a clean container daily.

Don't forget! It is very important that you feed your dog only the recommended diet. No table scraps, milk, treats, or supplements should be fed, unless otherwise directed by your vet, as they may trigger an allergic reaction. This is particularly important during the elimination diet trial phase, but also remains important longer term.

Purina® PRO PLAN®: a name you can trust

PURINA® PRO PLAN® VETERINARY DIETS are backed by strong science, with the latest nutritional findings applied to bring you some of the most innovative and effective formulas.

When you feed your dog PURINA® PRO PLAN® VETERINARY DIETS CANINE HA Hypoallergenic™, you can be confident you are providing optimal nutrition to help manage their food allergy and keep them healthy.

Please note that all indications for PURINA® Veterinary Diets mentioned in this brochure are for the dietary support of the dog with the listed condition and do not preclude appropriate medical management. The veterinary diets should be used under the supervision of your vet.





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PetCareteam

For advice on any aspect of pet care, just ask our experts

UK: 0800 212 161 ROI: 1800 509 368

Monday-Friday 8am-6pm. Or contact us online at
www.purina.co.uk | www.purina.ie

For more information, please speak
to your vet or contact Nestlé PURINA[®]

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