





The Essential Guide To: ELIMINATION DIET TRIALS



Thank you for agreeing to take part in an elimination diet trial to assist us in diagnosing your pet's skin condition.

Feeding your pet an elimination diet is a diagnostic test and, just the same as a blood test or an x-ray, it needs to be carried out correctly in order for the results to be worth your time and money.

Below are some guidelines which you will need to follow throughout the elimination diet trial period. Please follow them completely and ask our practice staff if you have any questions.

RULE	REASON
<p>Feed only the diet we've recommended and give only water to drink!</p>  <p>Don't give any treats or chews. If you would like to feed between meal times, store a sample of food in a clean, sealed container or bag and reward from there.</p> <p>Don't use any flavoured medication or toothpaste.</p>	<p>We've chosen this diet as it doesn't include the ingredients which may be causing the reaction in your pet.</p> <p>If anything additional is eaten by your dog or cat, it risks causing a reaction, rendering the trial null-and-void. A full list of extras includes treats, rewards, scraps, chew-toys, bones, supplements, tit-bits, table scraps, left-overs, biscuits, toast, tea/coffee and anything that passes your pet's lips. Be sure your pet doesn't raid the cupboard or bins.</p> <p>Flavoured chewable tablets and supplements may contain substances which may interfere with the interpretation of the trial results.</p>
 <p>Feed your pet in a separate room from other pets in your household.</p>	<p>Sharing meals and taking from other pet's bowls is a common reason for diet trial failure. Even licking another pet's bowl or taking crumbs of their food (even in the water bowl) can interfere with the trial.</p>
 <p>Wash all food bowls and anything used in serving the food before every meal. Wash your hands before handling the elimination diet.</p> <p>Make a single person responsible for feeding the pet on the elimination diet trial.</p>	<p>Stray 'contaminant' proteins might also cause a reaction. These are eliminated by disinfecting with warm soapy water.</p> <p>The more people involved in the feeding process, the greater the likelihood of a lapse from these rules. Ensure anyone likely to feed your pet (neighbours, dog walkers, kennel staff, cat sitters etc.) is aware of the diet trial.</p>
 <p>Never pour the kibble out of the bag.</p> <p>Buy your food in an appropriate bag size.</p>	<p>The package is a sterile environment and is the best place for storage. For added protection, place the bag in a large sealed container and always store in a cool dry place.</p> <p>Larger bags are more likely to become contaminated with many openings and closings.</p>
<p>Expect a dietary re-challenge at the end of the trial.</p>	<p>We can only confirm the true influence of food by re-introducing an allergen and noticing a 'flare' in skin signs.</p>

Extra tips for:

Dog owners - be sure that nothing is eaten while out on walks. This means on-lead walking and close supervision is a must. An extra safety-net for dogs who like to explore is to wear a 'basket' muzzle while out.

Cat owners - keep your cat indoors for the duration of the elimination diet trial. It's impossible to track the eating habits of cats once they leave your property.



ELIMINATION DIET SELECTED:..... FEEDING TRIAL START DATE:

DAILY FEEDING AMOUNT: FEEDING TRIAL END DATE:

DURATION OF FEEDING TRIAL: CHECK-UP DATES:

*Don't start an elimination diet trial until you are 100% confident with the process and can dedicate time to exclusively feeding your pet throughout the trial period. Holiday times are often not ideal.

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT IS THAT YOU DON'T FEED ANYTHING APART FROM THE RECOMMENDED DIET TO YOUR DOG OR CAT. ANY EXTRAS, HOWEVER SMALL, RISK FAILURE OF THE ELIMINATION DIET TRIAL.

Terms used in this form:

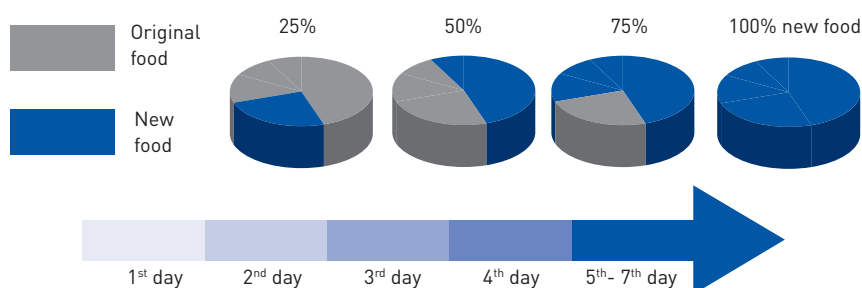
Allergen: a particle (a protein) which enters the dog or cat's body which is recognised as 'foreign' by their immune system. The immune system then tries to clear this allergen from the system, leading to a reaction and the signs we see in a pet with food allergy.

DIFFICULT CASES

The hunger strike:

Some pets may initially refuse to switch to their new diet. In these cases there are a couple of extra steps we can take:

- While it's important not to feed the troublesome allergen to your pet, where a hunger strike occurs, a slow transition may be necessary. Feed only a small amount of the trial food to start with and slowly increase the percentage fed over a 5 to 7 day period.



- Be consistent in your feeding habits. Give meals as you always have. A main meal at regular intervals every day is a good idea. Removing the food if it remains untouched for more than 15 minutes is also good practice. This way your pet will know when to expect their food.
- Take advantage of different formats of food (dry kibble and wet or canned preparations). Regardless of the high palatability claims of your trial diet, we may also be able to find other products that are suitable in the event of complete refusal to eat. Seek advice from your vet if required.

The hungry pet:

Some pets may appear hungry when on an elimination diet trial. Particularly if you make a change to the total amount fed or change the pattern by which they normally receive food. In these cases there are a couple of extra steps we can take:

- Be sure to feed an appropriate amount of food. Ask your veterinary practice to recommend a daily ration which will satisfy your pet's energy needs.
- Where available, consider feeding a wet or canned elimination diet, or combining this with the dry kibble. Water increases the volume of food that is eaten and so helps your pet feel full. Equally, be sure clean fresh water is available to your pet. In some circumstances there are also Moderate Calorie elimination diets available, also allowing you to feed a larger volume. Enquire about this to practice staff.
- Don't vary your feeding patterns. If your pet is used to receiving food between meals this may help them feel full throughout the day. Feed part of the elimination diet from a clean, sealed and sterile plastic bag or container (making sure there is no risk of contamination).

My pet's confession card:

We know you're going to make every effort to ensure no extras are eaten but with all the will in the world, sometimes your dog or cat may eat something apart from the trial diet. These mishaps can impact upon the results of the trial and for this reason we need to know if and when they have happened. Please be honest and 'confess' whether any treats, scraps, chew-toys, supplements, tit-bits, left-overs, flavoured supplements etc. have been consumed by your pet since their last visit:

DATE*	DESCRIPTION OF EXTRA(S) EATEN	AMOUNT EATEN	ANY REACTIONS (VOMITING, DIARRHOEA, SKIN REACTIONS ETC.)

*As soon as any food apart from the elimination diet is fed please notify your veterinary practice.