



Food Allergy Trial Instructions

To accomplish a true food allergy trial, specific steps must be taken to eliminate all possible allergy triggers when it comes to diet. These steps are followed for a minimum of 12-14 weeks. Take care to not let your pet cheat on the diet, even the smallest bit of an allergen can flare a reaction.

- Oral heartworm prevention contains meat flavoring that will interfere with the food allergy trial. Topical Advantage Multi must be used instead.
- Feed selected allergy prescription diet for a minimum of 12-14 weeks.
- No treats, people food, rawhides, flavored Nyla-bones, chewable vitamins etc.
- Separate pets for feeding and pick up food between meals or feed all pets the prescription diet. Cat food needs to be put up high where it can only be reached by the cat.
- Food stealing can increase during the trial. Please make sure kitchen cupboards and garbage is pet proofed.
- Give pills in a canned formulation of the selected prescription diet food.
- Change food gradually over 3 days. Start with $\frac{1}{4}$ allergy diet + $\frac{3}{4}$ original diet on day 1. Then do $\frac{1}{2}$ allergy diet + $\frac{1}{2}$ original diet on day 2. Then do $\frac{3}{4}$ allergy diet + $\frac{1}{4}$ original diet on day 3. Feed 100% allergy diet on day 4. If your pet has a sensitive stomach, transition more slowly over 7 days.
- Foods permitted while on prescription diet: cooked potatoes or sweet potatoes, carrots (raw or cooked), broccoli (raw or cooked), green beans (raw or cooked), apples, bananas.
- Make sure cat litter boxes are not accessible. Dogs like eating cat poop

Before changing or feeding your allergy trial pet anything new, check with the vet to make sure it won't interfere with the trial. This includes any food products (including those used to give medications) and oral medications.



Food Allergies

Symptoms and Signs:

Food allergies can affect any dog or cat. Symptoms can include episodes of vomiting, diarrhea, red itchy skin, hair loss, rash, skin infection, constant licking or chewing paws, scratching or rubbing the face or ears, ear infections, anal gland infections, or “hot spots”. These signs mimic other types of allergic disease, and most animals with food allergies have other types of allergies. This makes the diagnosis complicated and challenging.

Common Food Allergies:

Animals with allergy problems are most often allergic to the protein in their diet. To become allergic, they must have been exposed to the protein for some time. Thus, these allergies most commonly show up when your pet is an adult and they have probably been eating the same food for a significant period of time.

Diagnosis:

The best way to diagnose this problem is with an elimination diet. This involves purchasing or making a special food, which has a unique protein that your pet’s digestive system has never seen. It is important that no other food, including treats, table food, or rawhide chews is offered. This includes flavorings, such as those found in Sentinel, Trifexis or any other oral brand of heartworm prevention. This regimen sounds harsh, but is essential for a correct diagnosis. Even an occasional treat can make it seem like the diet is not working.

Trial Length and Completion:

The diet must be used for a minimum of 12-14 weeks. Then we offer a challenge by putting the pet back on its original diet. If the symptoms come back, we know that your pet has a food allergy. Often we never make it to the challenge phase because of the improvement on the special diet. The diet can then be used as a part of an allergy control program for your pet.

