

# Diet tips for pets with liver disease



Diet plays an important role in maintaining good liver health and also in pets' recovery from all forms of liver diseases.

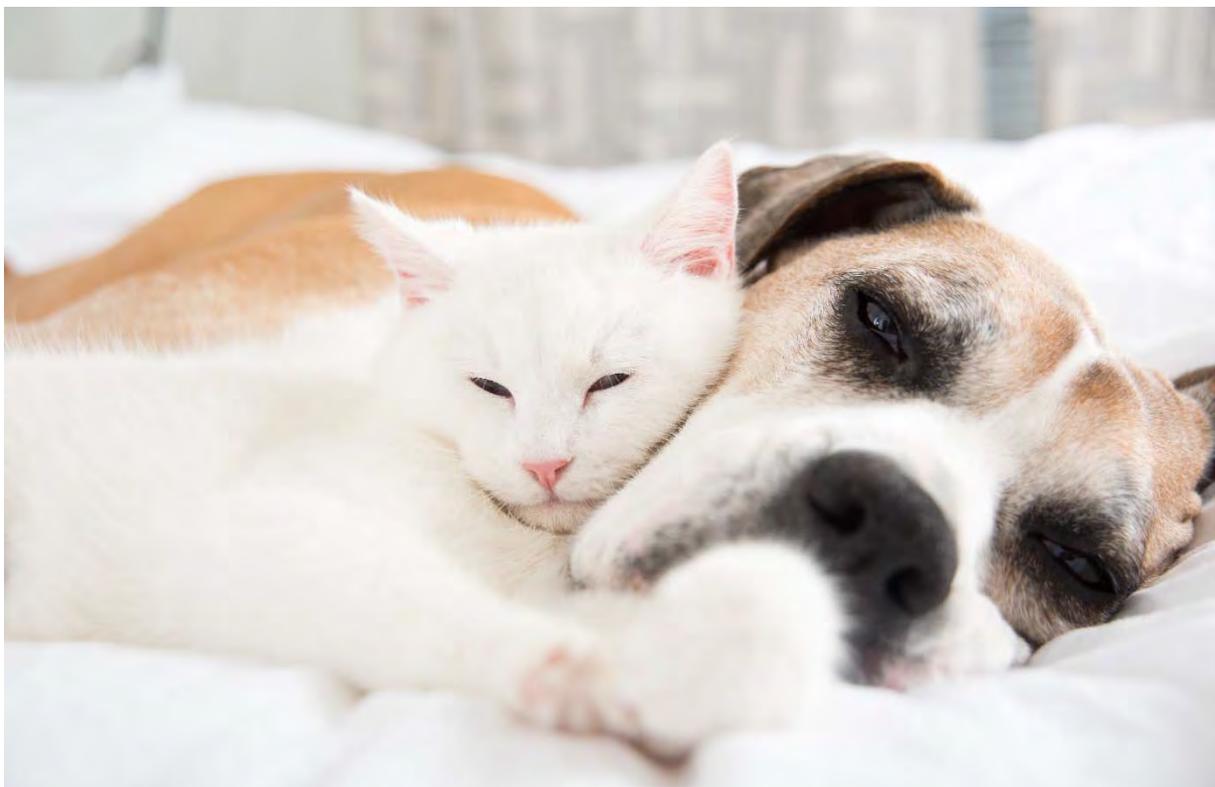
The best diet for your pet's liver health depends on the condition your pet is suffering from and its severity. For example, if your dog suffers from copper storage disease then he should be put on a diet that is low in copper.

Some dietary adjustments and nutritional supplements are generally recommended for pets suffering from liver diseases. This article contains some general dietary advice for pets with liver disease but...

*Always consult with your Vet about the appropriate diet for your pet's specific liver condition*

## What the diet should contain... and what not

One of the most common symptoms of liver disease in dogs and cats is reduced appetite. They may even refuse to eat at all. In those cases, feeding with a syringe or feeding tube may be necessary to make sure the animal gets the right nutrition and calories.



Once the initial condition has been brought under control it is important to start feeding again normally but some dietary adjustments are normally recommended to help the liver to recover.

Even when the liver is damaged beyond repair, the diet still plays an important role in the management / supportive care of the disease.

## Protein

The ideal protein intake for your pet depends on what form of liver disease your pet is suffering from and what stage it is at.

Protein restriction is sometimes recommended. Recent studies, however, indicate that protein requirements are greater for pets that are recovering from hepatic disease. Protein should therefore only be reduced if there is an indication of protein intolerance.



It is also important to bear in mind that not all protein is equal. High quality protein reduces the workload on the liver and studies have shown that **non-meat protein** sources (dairy, soy, and eggs) work better than meat sources for pets with liver diseases. ([Dog Cat Home Prepared Diet](#))

## Carbohydrates

Pets with hepatic diseases need carefully regulated portions of high quality and highly digestible carbohydrates. White rice, potatoes, and vegetables are good source of simple and complex carbohydrates for pets with liver diseases.

Simple carbohydrates are easily digested and absorbed. While vegetables provide fiber (non-digestible complex carbohydrates) but fiber reduces the availability and absorption of toxins like endotoxin, bacterial toxins, and some bile acids formed in the liver.

## Fats

High quality fats are an important part of our pet's diet. Fat is good source of calories and essential fatty acids (essential means they have to be obtained through the diet). Fats also enhance the food's palatability.

A number of studies have shown that cats and dogs with hepatic disease do well on diets containing 20 - 25% fat (Dog Cat Home Prepared Diet).

## Sodium (salt)

It is important to carefully monitor the salt content in the diet of pets suffering from liver disease.

A low sodium diet helps with ascites (extra fluid in the abdomen) and ascites are common in many hepatic diseases.

## Vitamins and minerals that support pet liver health

To help prevent deficiencies, the diet needs to be balanced with a selection of daily vitamin and mineral supplements. The vitamin requirements of dogs and cats, however, varies somewhat.

- **Vitamin K** helps to control bleeding disorders in both cats and dogs but a damaged liver produces and stores less Vitamin K which is needed for the liver to produce clotting factors, but the liver plays a central role in the clotting process (chronic liver disease are associated with coagulation disorders)

- **Vitamin E** is an antioxidant and as such helps to remove free radicals and prevents continued oxidative damage to the liver. A water soluble form is preferable for pets with liver disease
- **Vitamin C** may be needed for dogs as an important part of ascorbic acid is produced in the liver and it can be lower than normal if the dog is suffering from hepatic insufficiency
- **B Vitamins** are essential for the liver to perform its multitude of metabolic functions. Vitamin B, especially Thiamine supplementation, is strongly recommended for cats as they become deficient quite quickly if they suffer from loss of appetite
- **Zinc** reduces copper absorption and many dogs with hepatic disease also suffer from zinc deficiency
- **SAM-e** (S-adenosylmethionine) is naturally produced by the liver and is necessary for many functions of the liver cells. SAM-e synthesis is depressed in both cats and dogs with chronic liver disease. Most pets with liver disease therefore benefit greatly from SAM-e supplementation

## Vitamins to avoid

Vitamin A and Copper can aggravate liver damage and should therefore be avoided.

Vitamin A can be hepatotoxic and can interact synergistically with other substances and damage the liver. Excess copper is also hepatotoxic and should be kept to a minimum for pets with hepatic disease.



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On his website, he offers some recipes for [homemade diets](#) for cats and dogs with hepatic disease which you may find helpful.

Finally (again)...

*Always consult with your Vet about what is the best diet for your pet's specific liver condition*

We hope you find these diet tips helpful. If you have any questions or if there is anything we may be able to assist you with, please [contact us directly](#) through our website, [www.maxxipaws.com](http://www.maxxipaws.com).

Kind regards,

*Asa and Birgir Gislason*

Owners of maxxipaws

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**maxxiSAmE** is an advanced SAM-e formula for dogs and cats which promotes liver health and supports cognitive function.



When the liver is damaged less SAM-e, and thus less glutathione, is produced. This means even more liver cells become damaged, i.e. vicious cycle has started.

SAM-e has been shown to increase the glutathione levels in both dogs and cats.

maxxiSAMe is powder and can be given with food, unlike coated tablets which must be given an hour before mealtimes.

For more information about maxxiSAMe [for dogs](#) and [for cats](#) visit our website, [www.maxxipaws.com](http://www.maxxipaws.com).