

Highly palatable, calorically dense, complete and balanced food supports nutritional status of dogs living with cancer¹

Introduction:

Dogs with cancer often lose their appetite, which leads to weight loss and contributes to cachexia. This study investigated the effectiveness of a new highly palatable, complete and balanced, energy-dense therapeutic food in dogs with cancer.

Study design:

Study days	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	14	21	28
Transition to study food														
Pet parent assessment														
Eating enthusiasm														
Food intake														
Quality of life														
Stool quality														
Veterinarian assessment														
Body weight														
Laboratory tests														

Pet eating enthusiasm scale

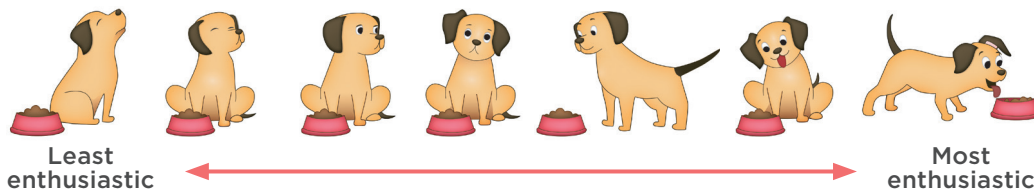


Figure 1. A scientifically validated emoji scale was used by pet parents to assess eating enthusiasm.²

Results:

Patients: 65 dogs were enrolled in the study (25 with benign tumors, 40 with malignant tumors). Mean age was 9.3 ± 2.6 years, mean body weight 28.0 ± 10.6 kg, 52% were female and 40% were purebred dogs.

Eating enthusiasm: Of dogs enrolled, 97% successfully transitioned over 7 days to eating the study food. Mean eating enthusiasm score on emoji scale (1=the least enthusiasm to eat; 7=the most enthusiasm to eat) for all dogs at time of enrollment was high at 6.1 and continued to stay high during the study. Dogs with malignant tumors showed a significant improvement in eating enthusiasm by day 3 ($P = 0.0002$) compared with baseline.

Quality of life: Dogs in the malignant tumor group experienced significant improvements in 'acting like normal today' ($P = 0.0293$) and 'dog is joyful today' ($P = 0.0436$) when compared with baseline.

The study



13

general or oncology
specialty practices
in the USA

65

adult dogs with
malignant or
benign tumors

28

days of feeding
Prescription Diet
ONC Care Canine
dry (study food)

Eligibility



Cancer confirmed
by histopathology

Dogs treated or
not treated with
anti-cancer therapy

Dogs stabilized
on non-steroidal
anti-inflammatory
drugs or
prednisone

Maximum 10%
calories from treats

Exclusions



Appetite stimulants

No food intake
of multiple days
duration

Other major
medical conditions

Fecal score: Fecal scores (1 - liquid diarrhea, 5 - firm feces) did not change over time and consistently remained above 4 for all dogs during the study.

Caloric intake: Intake (in grams and calories) gradually increased for all dogs and plateaued at day 14 (Figure 2).

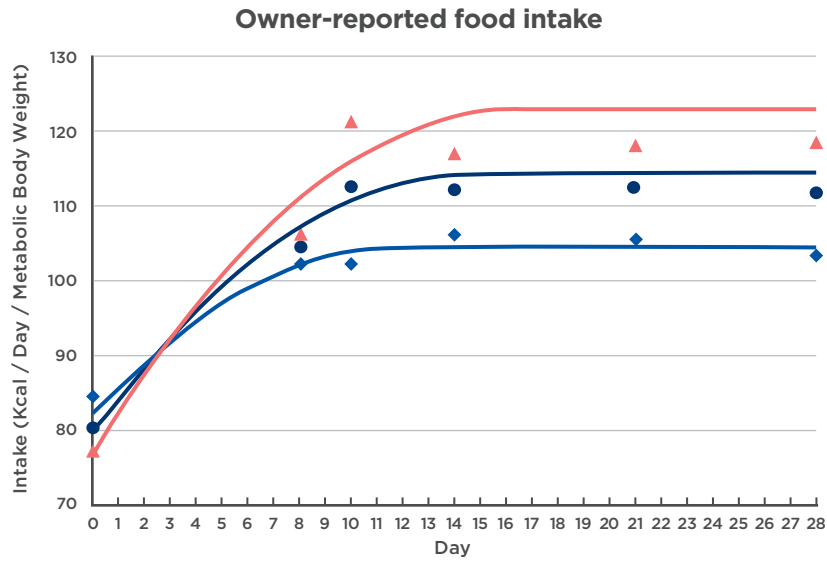


Figure 2. ● All tumors: Plateau = 114 Kcal at Day 14
 ◆ Benign tumors: Plateau = 104 Kcal at Day 11
 ▲ Malignant tumors: Plateau = 123 Kcal at Day 16

Body weight: Body weight increased significantly at day 28 in both groups when compared with baseline (Figure 3).

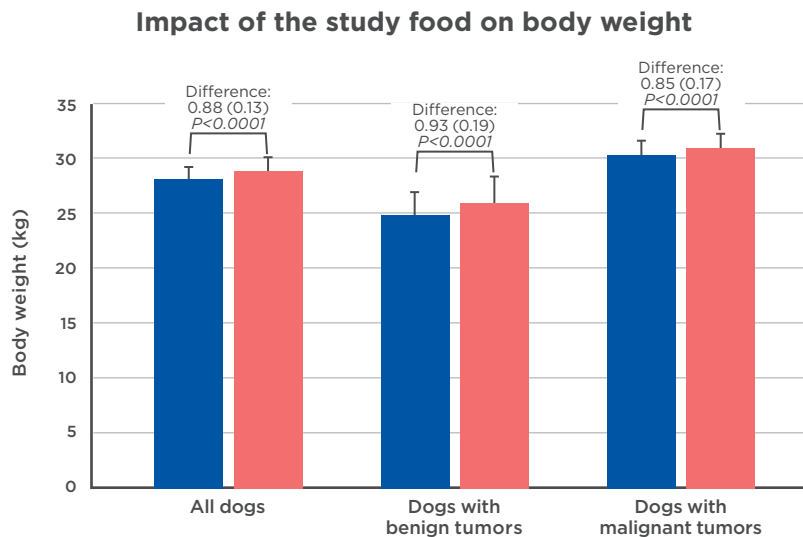


Figure 3. Data are represented as means and standard errors. ■ Enrollment ■ Day 28

Key conclusions

The study demonstrated high acceptance and continued eating enthusiasm of a new therapeutic food in dogs with cancer. There was a significant increase in the amount of food consumed and caloric intake, which was associated with positive effects on body weight, stool consistency and quality of life. This study supports the use of the new therapeutic food to maintain and improve nutritional status of dogs living with cancer.



References:

- ¹Anthony RM, Amundson MD, Brejda J, Becvarova I. Acceptance of a novel, highly palatable, calorically dense, and nutritionally complete diet in dogs with benign and malignant tumors. *Vet Sci* 2023;10(2):148 (<https://doi.org/10.3390/vetsci10020148>).
- ²Vanchina MA, Vondran JC, Swaney-Stueve M. Development and validation of an emoji-based pet eating enthusiasm scale, 2022 (Hill's data on file).

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