

# Cancer in Pets Don't Take It Lying Down

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## Cancer in Pets – Don't Just Take it Lying Down

By Deanna Raeke

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Cancer is not uncommon in dogs and cats and the incidence increases with age. It accounts for almost half of the deaths of pets over 10 years of age. Dogs get cancer at roughly the same rate as humans, while cats get fewer cancers.

Here are some common warning signs of cancer:

- Abnormal swellings that persist or continue to grow
- Sores that do not heal
- Weight loss
- Loss of appetite
- Bleeding or discharge from anybody opening
- Offensive odor
- Difficulty eating or swallowing
- Hesitation to exercise or loss of stamina
- Persistent lameness or stiffness
- Difficulty breathing, urinating, or defecating

This is definitely one area where modern medicine has made huge strides but you don't need to rely only on modern medicine. There are many things you, as a pet owner, can do to improve your pet's chances and keep them strong and help them fight.

### What Can We Do?

One of the first and most important things, from my point of view, is to make sure your pet's diet is as good as it can be. Specific diets have been formulated to help combat cancer but you can make your own at home very easily if you just keep some things in mind.

Cancer cells metabolize food differently than we are used to. Extensive research has shown that cancer tends to grow quickly with plenty of glucose to 'feed' on. This glucose is the product of broken down carbohydrates, simple sugars. To cut the available glucose for cancer to grow on you need to cut down the carbs in your pet's diet.

What cancer does not metabolize well is fats and the best fats to add is omega-3 fatty acids. These, aside from the fact that they may retard cancer growth, also have many benefits. They are known for their anti-inflammatory properties, they improve cardiovascular health and can boost immunity. As an added benefit, they also great for skin and coat. Flaxseed oil and cold water fish oil are the best sources.

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Cancer will also feed on protein but protein, at least a moderate amount of high-quality protein, is a necessity in your pet's diet. What the cancer is actually 'feeding' on is the amino acids provided by the protein. Amino acids are the "building blocks" for tissues, organs, enzymes, hormones, antibodies, etc. This is why many cancer patients have low muscle mass. To combat against this, supplement your pet's diet with some good amino acids, even on top of the omega-3.

Arginine appears to enhance immune function and may inhibit the growth of some tumors and for cats be sure to add Taurine which is a necessity in their diet. Another amino acid to add is glutamine, especially if your pet is on chemo. This will help to keep the gastrointestinal tract in balance which can be beneficial since vomiting and diarrhea are two side effects often seen in chemotherapy treatments. It may also help to inhibit tumor growth. And last, but not least, add glycine. This will counter the effects of the chemo drug, cisplatin, on the kidneys.

Antioxidants have been shown to slow the growth and spread of some types of cancer. They are known for their ability to fight 'free radicals.' Vitamin C, Vitamin E and Selenium are the most effective but you need to watch the dosage. Too much of any supplement can be a danger. Accepted dosages are Vitamin C dose: dogs 100mg per 10 lbs of body weight twice daily; cats, 250mg twice daily. Vitamin E dose: dogs and cats 100IU per 10lbs body weight twice daily. Selenium dose: dogs and cats, 25ug per 10lbs twice daily, but be sure to double check with your vet as an added precaution.

'Cytotoxic' is an agent or process that is toxic to or kills cells and chemotherapy is one form of cytotoxicity. A natural cytotoxic is Vitamin A because it is a retinol. Studies have documented the capacity for natural and synthetic retinoids to reduce carcinogenesis significantly. Vitamin A is also commonly known as the anti-infective vitamin, because it is required for normal functioning of the immune system.

Now let's take a look at boosting the immune system. A strong immune system will help your pet fight off other illnesses that cancer treatment make it more vulnerable to as well as helping your pet to fight the cancer itself. Green tea is a well known immune system booster and it may as well inhibit cancer cell growth. You can easily add a standardized extract to your pet's diet. Ginseng is another well known immune system booster and may actually decrease tumors. Garlic also has immune building properties as well as antioxidant properties. Be careful with garlic though, high doses may cause anemia.

I am not offering you any miracles but anything you can do to help your pet fight is a positive. Along with the diet and supplements, another very important thing you can do is keep a positive attitude. As pet owners, we know our pets are a lot smarter than they are often given credit for. They can pick up on our moods and feelings and attitudes. Keeping a positive outlook can do more for you and your pet than you probably realize.

And for your pet's sake, think about going natural!

The author of this article, Deanna Raeke, is a pet owner, pet lover and natural health advocate. She dedicates her time to animal advocacy and welfare and the study and research of natural health for people and pets. For more information for your pet's health, visit [Natural Health for Pets](#).

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