

Helping with a Cancer Diagnosis

By Suzi Beber, Land of PureGold Foundation Board Member & Founder, Smiling Blue Skies Cancer Fund

Would you be prepared to cook a diet for your dog? You can even feed the food that Rochelle feeds to her dog. It is an excellent food, and it is easy to make. It is called Canine Life. Rochelle has information about this food on her website, and you can go directly to the company's website, depending on whether you live on the east coast or west coast.

WEST COAST: <http://www.westcoastcaninelife.com/>

EAST COAST: <http://www.theskyesthelimit.com/>

Rochelle has the very best wild salmon oil supplement available. It is called VITAL CHOICE, and I would recommend it. You would begin with 2000 mg per day, that is, 1000 mg added to each meal. If she experienced a loose stool, we would cut back to 1000 mg per day and build more slowly.

If your dog is taking antibiotics, please ensure that your s/he is getting a non-dairy acidophilus while taking them, to keep the gastrointestinal system as healthy as possible. Two products I like are SISU Dophilus Plus Acidophilus and Natural Factors makes a non-dairy formulation as well.

There is a supplement though, that I have used on and off for years, for certain situations, and I think that your dog may benefit from this supplement. It is called REGENERATION and is made by Health Concerns. You can order this supplement from the website, and it is very reasonable! Here is the direct link:

<https://www.drshen.com/healthconcerns/regeneration.htm>

If you decide to get this supplement, please give 1 tablet per day, and you could add this tablet to one meal, based on 2 meals per day.

Here is one of my older articles about feeding companion animals who have been diagnosed with cancer. It is another resource that I think can be helpful:

The Cancer Cuisine Challenge . . . Everything from Soup to Nuts The Story of Noritaka

When Noritaka was diagnosed with a very aggressive fibrosarcoma, it broke her guardians' hearts, but they were determined to do whatever they could for their beloved Nori for whatever time she had left. A tumour had been found at the junction of the small and large intestine, and when she first came home following her surgery, she wouldn't eat. Nori's guardians knew that if a cat doesn't eat for 24 hours, she can suffer from hepatic lipidosis, a life threatening condition that would be an addition to the cancer she was already fighting. **This is when animal** guardians have to pull out all the stops. Fortunately, Nori's guardians made sure that they were very well prepared for the challenge facing them. Initially, they used a syringe to feed Nori beef liver that had been gently cooked and then liquefied in a blender. They fed her several meals throughout the day and night, and it was a real cause for celebration when Nori began to lap up a mixture of tuna and warm filtered water on her own. Even Nori's favourite biscuits were whirled in the blender, and slowly, she graduated to eating ground beef, turkey, and chicken, and puréed fruits and vegetables. It was a miracle that Noritaka survived her surgery, and it was another miracle when she lived ten days past her surgery, but it was a true testament to love, when Nori surprised everyone, her beloved guardians most of all, and lived ten months past her original diagnosis.

There are no ten commandments or easy to follow lesson plans for feeding a pet with cancer. Simply put, one diet does not fit all, and what works well today, may not be tolerated at all tomorrow. Tastes and textures change. Even regular feeding schedules and places, can be turned upside down. The road to good nutrition is not always paved the way we would like it to be, and guardians have to be prepared for sharp turns and potholes when faced with cancer. With the guidance of a veterinarian or nutritionist, we may get a better idea of what we can expect on our journey, but there is always the road untraveled.

The most critical thing of all, is ensuring that your canine or feline cancer patient eats, and this can be the most difficult job of all, because pets with cancer lose weight, not only because they reduce their regular food intake, but also because of the tremendous metabolic impact of cancer on our animal companions. "If they go hungry long enough, they'll eat anything," does not hold true for cancer, despite what anyone tells you.

Research tells us that animals with cancer have an altered carbohydrate metabolism, so a diet that is lower in carbohydrates (while not discounting the value of complex carbohydrates), and contains high quality proteins and fish oil as the primary fat source, best meets the needs of the animal cancer patient. Grains should account for no more than 10% of the diet for dogs, while no grain is recommended for cats. That leaves us with 30 to 50% meat for dogs, along with 30 to 40% fruits and vegetables, and for cats, 40 to 60% meat, and 20 to 30 % fruits and vegetables. A calcium source and a vitamin-mineral supplement, complete the base of the diet. When preparing food for your pet, try to use organic products, and always use distilled, filtered, or spring water. Remember though, all rules truly do go out the window as you are speeding down the highway, when it comes to battling cancer on the nutrition front, so be prepared to feed "anything," from soup to nuts!

Using the crockpot is one of the easiest ways to prepare a nutritious meal for your cancer patient and its aroma may be just the thing to entice your pet to eat. Knowing the percentage of protein, fats, and carbohydrates you are working towards, makes it easy to choose ingredients for your cancer cooking challenge. Consider chicken, beef, turkey, or a novel protein like ostrich or emu or buffalo, along with liver and heart, eggs, carrots, broccoli, celery, cabbage, Bok Choy, turnip greens, spinach, and summer squash, enhanced by antioxidant rich garlic and turmeric. Canned wild salmon, sardines, mackerel, and other fish, can top off a meal of whole brown rice or whole oats, sweet potato, and broccoli, and for a change, try protein rich quinoa and teff.

If your companion animal is accustomed to a fresh whole foods *raw* diet, stick with it, but keep in mind, that if your pet is undergoing chemotherapy or radiation treatments, cooked food is recommended for animals who are immune suppressed in any way. Whatever way you decide to feed your cancer patient, ensure that the diet is evaluated on a regular basis, always keeping your pet's overall condition in mind. This is when a journal comes in handy.

Colour Your Pet's World with the Brightest Fruits and Vegetables

Apples are a very rich source of vitamin C. They also contain potassium, calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, selenium, iron, manganese, copper, zinc, vitamin A, folate, and vitamin E. Red Delicious, Northern Spy, and Ida Red apples, contain more potent disease fighting antioxidants than other red apples.

Blueberries and *cranberries* contain significant levels of resveratrol, a natural compound that has been found to have anti-cancer properties, and is also believed to reduce the risk of heart disease. Blueberries are a very rich source of antioxidants which come from anthocyanins, the pigments that give blueberries their deep blue colour.

Broccoli is a phyto nutrient dense member of the cruciferous family. It is one of the most important cancer fighting vegetables, containing at least three cancer protective biochemicals including sulforaphane, which

supports the immune system. Broccoli contains lots of vitamin C and beta-carotene, as well as vitamins A and D. It is also a low glycemic vegetable, which means that it does not cause a rapid rise in blood glucose levels. Other members of the cruciferous family include Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, cabbage, rutabagas, kohlrabi, bok choy, kale, Swiss Chard, collards, and turnips. Cooking cruciferous vegetables releases indole, a cancer fighting enzyme.

Cantaloupes belong to the same family as the cucumber, squash, and pumpkin. They are an excellent source of vitamin A, because of their very high concentration of beta-carotene. Cantaloupe is also a good source of vitamin B-6, vitamin C, fibre, folate, niacin, and potassium. Try giving your feline friend a little piece of cantaloupe with a dab of goat yogurt and a sprinkling of catnip.

Carrots are one of the kings of the vegetable patch. There are over 100 varieties, from deep purple and white to the brilliant orange we are most accustomed to seeing. Each is a storehouse of nutrient power. Carrots contain pro-vitamin A, also known as beta-carotene, vitamins B, C, D, E, and K, riboflavin, niacin, calcium, potassium, phosphorus, sodium, iron, magnesium, manganese, sulphur, copper, and iodine. They support the immune system, aid digestion, and are also recognized as a glandular tonic.

Green beans are an excellent source of vitamin A because of their concentration of carotenoids, including beta-carotene. They also contain vitamins C and K, calcium, copper, fibre, folic acid, iron, magnesium, manganese, niacin, phosphorus, potassium, protein, riboflavin, thiamin, and Omega 3 fatty acids.

Mangos are a good source of fibre and they also contain a small amount of protein. They have an excellent vitamin and mineral profile. Mangos contain potassium, calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, iron, selenium, copper, zinc, and manganese. They are also rich in vitamins A, C, folate, and B-6.

Pomegranates are a rich source of ellagic acid and also contain anthocyanidins and proanthocyanidins (flavonoids) that have demonstrated reduced tumour angiogenesis in a variety of studies. Pomegranate also has antibacterial and antiviral properties.

Pumpkin may be just what the doctor ordered, if your canine or feline companion is experiencing bouts of constipation or diarrhea. We all know how hard cancer treatment can be on our pets' digestive systems. Pumpkin is a terrific stool softener, which makes it a perfect remedy for constipation, and since it is very rich in fibre, all you have to do is add 1 to 2 teaspoons to your pet's food, as an effective remedy for diarrhea.

Sweet potatoes are a great source of vitamin E. They also include an abundance of vitamins A, B-6, and C, calcium, iron, folate, potassium, copper, and thiamine. Sweet potatoes are a rich source of beta-carotene, which may be a significant factor in reducing the risk of certain cancers. They are also a good source of dietary fibre and help promote a healthy gastrointestinal tract.

Tomatoes have been shown to have the ability to lower the risk of some kinds of cancer. The secret to the tomato's success is lycopene, the chemical that gives tomatoes their bright red colour. Cooked tomatoes contain more lycopene, because cooking breaks down the tomato's cellular walls, allowing carotenoids to be more concentrated. To make tomatoes even more beneficial, add a little fat, like cold pressed virgin olive oil. This simple trick allows the lycopene to be even better absorbed into the body.

Watermelon contains 40% more lycopene than tomatoes!

A Cocktail for Cancer

Nobody has been able to put a *cap* on cancer yet, but every day, we are learning about new ways to support our animal companions. Dr. John Carter, a British veterinary surgeon and research scientist, created this cancer cocktail, after losing his own dog to cancer. Combine 8 ounces of raw chopped liver, e.g., beef, bison, chicken, 4 ounces of grated carrots, and 1/2 ounce of ground Brazil nuts, which are the richest source of natural selenium, and serve. This recipe can easily be pureéd in a food processor or blender, and served as a complete meal, or used as a topping for other meals.

Pick Me Up Electrolyte Replacement Formula

This popular recipe is recommended for dogs and cats suffering from diarrhea, dehydration, heat stress, or physical exhaustion.

2 cups filtered water

1 tablespoon unrefined sea salt

1/4 teaspoon liquid colloidal trace minerals, available at health food stores

1/2 cup unpasteurized local honey

Dosage: 1 tablespoon per 5 pounds body weight, every 2 to 3 hours

The Stock that Rocks

Choose organic ingredients whenever possible.

Ingredients

24 cups filtered water

3 pounds chicken backs and necks

2 carrots, in pieces

2 celery stalks, in pieces

3 Shitake mushrooms, dried or fresh

2 garlic cloves

1 piece fresh ginger

12 white peppercorns

1 to 2 tablespoons Kosher salt, to taste

Handful fresh parsley, Italian or curly

Other fresh herbs to taste, e.g., thyme, oregano, sage, rosemary

Instructions

Put all ingredients in a large stockpot. Bring to a rolling boil, skim off the foam, turn the heat down to simmer, and leave the pot to sit and stew all day long. Refrigerate overnight. Next morning, skim off the fat, remove the meat and vegetables, strain the stock into storage containers and freeze. This will give you a nutrient-dense broth to add to any recipe, including biscuits and treats, or as a topper for regular meals.

Shiitake mushrooms have a long history, going back more than 1000 years, to Ancient China, where it was a symbol of longevity. Shiitake mushrooms contain an active compound called lentinan, a type of polysaccharide referred to as a branched beta-glucan, which supports the immune system, helping the body in its ability to fight infection and disease. Beta-glucan has also been shown to have anti-cancer activity.

Fresh and Friendly Frittata

Choose organic ingredients whenever possible.

Ingredients

3/4 cup artichoke hearts, finely chopped (Choose artichokes canned in water.)

1 clove garlic, finely minced

3 farm fresh free range eggs

2 tablespoons cold pressed extra virgin olive oil (Butter can also be used.)

1/4 teaspoon turmeric

1/4 teaspoon sea salt

1 tablespoon fresh oregano or 1-1/2 teaspoons dried oregano

1 cup grated goat cheese, e.g., Woolwich Dairy Goat Mozzarella

1/4 cup Lara's "Pure Oats" whole grain oat flour or try artisan whole grain bread crumbs

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350F degrees. In oven to table cookware, whisk eggs and goat cheese together, and then add the remaining ingredients, making sure to mix thoroughly. Sprinkle with extra dried oregano, just before placing in the oven.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the centre of the frittata is set and the top is lightly golden. Cool to room temperature, and just before serving, sprinkle with fresh wheat grass and/or parsley. My four footed and two footed family members love both. Store in the refrigerator or freezer.

This recipe can easily be doubled and you can experiment with different cheeses and herbs. Invite the whole family for this Fresh and Friendly Frittata.

Curcumin is the orange-yellow pigment that gives turmeric its colour. Turmeric is a perennial herb that belongs to the ginger family, and it is a critical ingredient in curry powder. Turmeric has a very long history as a spice, and curcumin is gaining more and more recognition for its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects. In fact, curcumin has more potent antioxidant properties than vitamin E. Curcumin's potential as a cancer preventive, has been supported by several studies.

Artichokes are known as an antioxidant super food. They contain a variety of phytonutrients that have anti-cancer, heart healthy, cholesterol lowering qualities, and also support the immune system. Artichokes are an excellent source of vitamin C and contain some of the most powerful polyphenol-type antioxidants, including quercetin, rutin, anthocyanins, gallic acid, luteolin, cynarian, caffeic acid, chlorogenic acid, and silymarin.

Garlic offers potassium, zinc, selenium, and vitamin A, B-1, and C, as well as calcium, manganese, copper, and iron. Garlic has antimicrobial properties, inhibiting the growth of bacteria and fungi. It also stabilizes blood pressure and supports the immune system. A little goes a long way.

Carrot Flan

This recipe originated in England. The original recipe comes from a wonderful book called "Nature's Children," revised and expanded, written by Juliette de Bairacli Levy, author of "The Complete Herbal Handbook for the Dog and Cat."

Choose organic ingredients whenever possible.

Ingredients

2 cups finely grated raw carrot
6 raw egg yolks
6 tablespoons filtered water or "Stock that Rocks"
1/2 teaspoon sea salt

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350F degrees. Lightly grease a pyrex or cake pan. Whisk egg yolks with water or stock, and add sea salt. Add grated carrot and mix thoroughly. Bake for 30 minutes. Cool, cut into strips, and serve. This recipe can be topped with goat yogurt.

In place of carrots, try sweet potatoes, and season with cinnamon.

Treats are associated with happy times. Making special treats for our sick animal companions is one very important way we can support them, and there are times, when the only thing our pets will eat, are treats. With this in mind, here is a recipe for a fan favourite that can be easily adapted to meet the changing tastes of your animal companion. The base ingredients for this recipe are: 4 cups chickpea flour, 1 cup apple sauce, 2 teaspoons Saigon cinnamon, and 2 teaspoons carob powder.

Preheat oven to 325F degrees. Cover a large cookie sheet with parchment paper, for easy clean up. Combine all ingredients in a food processor or blender. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead well. Cut into desired shapes and place on cookie sheet, or simply place dough in the middle of the cookie sheet, roll it out to the corners, and lightly score with a knife or pizza cutter, in the perfect size for your dog or cat. Place cookie sheet in preheated oven. Bake for 20 minutes, then turn oven down to 175F degrees and allow treats to bake for 40 more minutes. Turn oven off, and allow treats to cool in the oven. Store in an airtight container or ziplock bag.

You can replace the apple sauce with organic canned pumpkin or banana, or, for your feline friend, replace fruit with pureéd liver, and use 1 finely minced garlic clove and 2 teaspoons of fresh parsley, in place of the cinnamon and carob powder. Try another variation, by making the recipe with 1 cup of salmon, tuna, sardines, or another fish of your choice, 1 finely minced garlic clove, and 2 teaspoons of fresh parsley or catnip, or a combination.

Each of the ingredients in this recipe has been chosen, not only because they taste good, but also because they are good for our pets. Chickpea flour is a good source of potassium, phosphorus, iron, folate, copper, and magnesium. It also contains unsaturated fatty acids and is high in fibre and protein. An interesting fact about chickpea flour, is that its high protein content does not turn into glucose in the bloodstream, so it is not only good for pets with cancer, but is good for dogs who cannot tolerate grain, dogs who need to lose weight, and dogs who are diabetic. Carob contains all the principal vitamins and minerals, and soothes the gastrointestinal tract, while cinnamon is often used in the treatment of digestive upsets, including diarrhea.

Kombu Candy

Ingredients

Package of Kombu, e.g., Barkley Sound Kombu
1/4 cup unpasteurized local honey
1/2 cup filtered water
1 cup finely ground almonds or Brazil nuts

Instructions

Soak dried Kombu pieces in filtered water until they are soft. Drain and cut Kombu into small pieces, enough to fill 1/2 cup. Combine 1/4 cup unpasteurized local honey with 1/2 cup filtered water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to simmer, add the Kombu, and continue to gently cook until the liquid has evaporated. This takes about 1 hour. Spread 1 cup of ground almonds or 1 cup of ground Brazil nuts on a parchment covered cookie sheet. Then, take the Kombu pieces and coat them in the ground nuts. Bake in a preheated 300F degree oven for 30 minutes. Cool completely before enticing your cat and dog with these tasty morsels.

Kombu, also called *Laminaria digitata*, *setchelli*, and horsetail kelp, since that is exactly what it looks like, is a meaty, high protein seaweed that supports liver, stomach, and kidney function. Kombu contains iodine, carotenes, vitamins B, C, D, and E, calcium, magnesium, potassium, silica, iron, and zinc, and it is higher in natural mineral salts than most other seaweeds. Kombu also contains fucoidan, a complex polysaccharide. In Japan, studies have shown that when fucoidan is administered to cancer cells in a petrie dish, the cells were destroyed within 72 hours, through a self induced process called apoptosis.

Check out Barkley Sound Kombu which is hand picked and sun cured, from the cold waters of Vancouver Island's west coast. For more information, visit www.canadiankelp.com

Share a Cup of Green Tea with Your Pet

Green tea is a rich source of flavonols, made from tea leaves that have been dried in a special way, to avoid oxidation of the phenolic compounds. The principal flavanol compounds found in green tea are called catechins. The primary compounds include catechin, epicatechin, epicatechin gallate, epigallocatechin, and epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), which is thought to be the primary anti-cancer agent in green tea. Check out decaffeinated, freeze dried green tea solids, commonly called green tea extract.

We have to step up to the plate for our pets with cancer. Creativity in the kitchen goes a long way and can unlock many doors. Over seven years and three hundred case studies later, I still believe that good nutrition points the way towards quality of life for our beloved animal companions with cancer. It is one way that together, we can take a bite out of cancer, for precious pets and people too.