

Elimination Diet Trial

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Your veterinarian suspects that your pet may have a food allergy that is contributing to their skin and/or ear disease. The only way to accurately diagnose a food allergy is to conduct an elimination diet trial. This involves feeding your pet a diet that does not contain ingredients to which they may have developed an allergy and monitoring your pet for signs of improvement. If your pet improves on the new diet, your veterinarian may recommend feeding their previous diet briefly and looking for any flareups of their condition. This helps to confirm their food allergy.

The goal of the diet trial is to feed a diet that ideally contains either a hydrolyzed protein or one that does not contain ingredients that your pet has previously eaten, usually a prescription diet. Simply switching brands or changing from one protein source to another may not be sufficient because many diets may have some cross-contamination from other ingredients that are not listed on the label. A home-cooked diet consisting of a novel protein and novel carbohydrate can also be used for the diet trial, but a board-certified veterinary nutritionist should be consulted to make sure the diet is balanced.

The total length of the diet trial can depend on the individual response of pets, which can range from 4-12 weeks, with most dogs and cats responding by 8 weeks.

Patient's name: _____

Your veterinarian is recommending the following diet to be fed exclusively during the diet trial:

Recommended recheck date: ____ / ____ / ____



Gradually switch to the new diet over 3-5 days ($\frac{1}{4}$ new diet + $\frac{3}{4}$ old diet, then $\frac{1}{2}$ + $\frac{1}{2}$, then $\frac{3}{4}$ new diet + $\frac{1}{4}$ old diet).



This diet must be fed exclusively; no other foods or treats should be fed during this period unless otherwise instructed by your veterinarian. The prescription diet kibble can be used as treats or rewards.



Flavored chew toys, rawhides, animal-derived bones, flavored synthetic bones, chewable medications, flavored toothpaste, dental chews, chewable supplements, and people food should not be given during the trial period.



Unflavored synthetic toys (i.e. rubber, plastic) can be offered.



Heartworm and flea/tick preventatives: Your veterinarian may recommend injectable, topical, or flavorless oral substitutions if your pet takes any flavored oral preventatives.



Oral medications need to be directly administered into your pet's mouth or hidden within the canned version (if available) of the prescription diet recommended. Other options typically used to hide pills should be avoided (e.g., cheese, lunch meat, peanut butter, pill pouches/pill treats, etc.).



Inform all family members, friends, and neighbors who might offer your pet any treats or foods that a diet trial is being conducted.



If there are multiple pets in the household, it may be necessary to either feed your pets in separate rooms, or feed all same-species pets the prescription diet during the trial.



It may be necessary to keep your pet in a separate room while you eat if they tend to scavenge the floors for dropped food items.



Please contact your veterinarian if they are not eating the prescribed diet or if they are experiencing vomiting or diarrhea after starting the diet.

Tracking Progress During the Elimination Diet Trial

1. Below is a table to chart your pet's progress as you proceed through the food trial.
2. Please rate your pet's skin lesions (reddened skin, red bumps, hair loss, crusts/dry patches) as none, mild, moderate or severe.
3. Please rate your pet's itchiness on a scale from 0 to 10 (1=none, 10=severe/intense)
4. Bring this chart filled out to reference during follow-up visits or progress calls.

Time	Pet's Lesions Rate: none, mild, moderate or severe	Pet's Itchiness Rate: 0 to 10 (1=none, 10=severe/intense)	Comments
Day 0 (initial appointment)			
Week 1			
Week 2			
Week 3			
Week 4			
Week 5			
Week 6			
Week 7			
Week 8			
Week 9			
Week 10			
Week 11			
Week 12			