

FACT SHEET

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the protein content of the diet?

The average overall protein content, on an 'as fed' basis is 9–10%. Naturediet Puppy/Junior is 12%, while Naturediet Senior/Lite is specially formulated with a lower protein content of 8%.

The type of protein contained within Naturediet is of high biological value, derived from high quality meat and vegetable sources. This type of protein is easier to digest than poorer quality protein sources therefore your pet does not have to consume large quantities of food in order to receive his/her total protein requirements.

What is the oil content of the diet?

The average fat/oil content within the product on an 'as fed' basis is 6–8%. The fat/oil contained within Naturediet is the fat which naturally occurs from the raw meat and vegetables and contains all the essential fatty acids required to help with the skin and coat condition and is in the appropriate levels required by the dog's body for maintenance.

Fat provides the most concentrated source of energy, capable of releasing approximately double the energy per gram of either carbohydrates or protein. Fats can be stored in the body for warmth and are involved in the transport and storage of fat-soluble Vitamins A, D, E, and K. Fats and oils help the palatability of pet foods, making the diet more appealing to your pet.

How can Naturediet help a dog with colitis?

Naturediet is recommended to help a dog prone to colitis and other intestinal disorders. This is because, our all-natural ingredients, without the use of chemical additives reduces the risk of allergy related problems occurring. Also a large percentage of dogs that are prone to these conditions respond well to a diet high in fibre.

Naturediet contains natural fibre that helps slow down the speed of digested food passing through the large intestine. This provides more time for the water and electrolytes to be absorbed resulting in better faeces consistency. Naturediet Sensitive is the best diet for a dog suffering from this condition; however, all Naturediet varieties have proven to have a positive effect.

Does Naturediet contain gluten?

A dog with a specific sensitivity to gluten can develop a form of small intestine disease upon coming into contact with certain types of gluten resulting in malabsorption, chronic diarrhoea and weight loss.

Gluten is present in cereals. All cereals are composed of a germ, which is surrounded by an endosperm which is responsible for the storage of carbohydrate in the form of starch and protein, this being gluten. Gluten supports the growth of the germ. Although all cereals, including wheat, barley, oats, rice, rye, maize and corn, contain gluten the source contained within rice and oats is different and, therefore, avoids the possibilities of allergies associated with gluten.

What is the best way to adjust a dog to Naturediet?

When changing a dog's diet it is always advisable to do so gradually over at least 3 days. Never make a sudden change in your dog's diet as this can sometimes lead to an intestinal upset.

Add a small quantity of Naturediet to the dog's previous diet and gradually increase the quantity of Naturediet whilst decreasing the previous diet. This will give the dog's stomach a chance to adapt to Naturediet quality and is unlikely to cause upset.

What are the levels of salt in Naturediet?

Naturediet does not add salt to any of its products. All sodium/salt within Naturediet is derived from the natural ingredients used within the product.

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Salt required by the body per 100k/cal ME is 0.22g. Naturediet contains only 0.18g.

Aware that the product was slightly low in sodium levels we made the decision not to add extra salt. The quantity of salt required is so minimal it is often obtained by the dog from other sources, e.g. biscuits and treats.

Why do you not put Naturediet in a tin?

The packaging used by Naturediet is easy to store and environmentally friendly. The empty packs can be stacked into one another for ease of disposal. The packaging has a special barrier film within the layers, which prevents oxygen and organisms gaining entry keeping the product sterile. The packaging can be used within a microwave oven for people who wish to feed a warm meal.

Do dogs need to be given biscuits for their teeth?

Naturediet is a complete meal containing meat, brown rice and vegetables and therefore requires no additional supplements for the dog to receive all the essential nutrients required for a healthy life. Naturediet is a moist food with a firm consistency and is unlike other moist or dry foods in that it is unlikely to stick to the teeth and gums encouraging bacteria and decay to occur as a result.

Naturediet, unlike the majority of dog foods, does not contain added sugar, therefore it is better for teeth and gums than most proprietary dried and tinned foods. Dogs' teeth can be looked after by providing the occasional raw carrot, apple or raw hide chew. This will encourage the dog to use his natural chewing instinct to help clean his teeth and gums preventing tartar and decay occurring.

Can I give my dog milk products?

All mammals are born with the ability to digest and utilise the energy provided by their mother's milk, as their small intestine produces a digestive enzyme called Lactase; this breaks down the milk sugar Lactose which would otherwise pass intact to the bowel. However, mammals only feed from their mother for a short period of time and Lactase production is therefore limited to the first months of life and once weaned is no longer made available during digestion. Many animals therefore become naturally intolerant of milk products as they mature.

If milk has remained a constant part of the diet since birth, then Lactase production may continue into adulthood and if milk is deemed desirable within the diet we recommend the use of goat/sheep yoghurt as opposed to cow's milk. Goat/sheep's milk is naturally homogenised which means the fat molecules are equally dispersed throughout the liquid, unlike cow's milk whose fat coagulates, forming a distinct layer. The fat molecules are also smaller in goat/sheep products and thereby easier to digest. Yoghurt with live cultures is even healthier as some of the 'friendly' bacteria may survive the acidic stomach and help maintain the environment in the gut.

How can Naturediet help if my dog suffers from a skin problem like Eczema?

Skin is the largest organ of the body and acts as an area of elimination for any substances deemed by the body as toxic or 'foreign' to the natural balance. If a toxin or 'foreign' particle enters the blood stream, often during the digestive process, the easiest means by which it can be eliminated is through the skin.

Allergic or intolerance reaction to diet is commonly the cause of skin conditions and may be confirmed with a change of food. An elimination diet is best to establish exactly what is causing the skin complaint and Naturediet is ideal, for it is free from the common allergens and inappropriate ingredients used in most proprietary pet foods. Many pet foods contain cheap meat meals or rendered fats whereas Naturediet uses only real meat; chemical additives like colourings, flavourings, stabilisers and fillers whereas Naturediet is chemical free; gluten, which can cause absorption problems whereas Naturediet uses only gluten free brown rice; a high level of cereal whereas Naturediet uses only brown rice in low levels; excessively cooked ingredients whereas Naturediet's unique sterilisation process takes less than 5 minutes, eliminating the heat damage to the ingredients that may provoke an immune response. Naturediet also contains Omega 3 and 6, which is proven to benefit skin and coat condition.

Naturediet also provides 3 elimination diets, which contain only 1 protein source:

Naturediet Chicken, Naturediet Lamb and Naturediet Fish.

If a protein allergy is suspected as the cause of the condition, these recipes may be fed alone to eliminate the known allergen from the diet completely.

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Is it best to feed just one menu to my dog?

Ideally, a variety of different recipes should be fed as:

- Different meats provide varying levels of nutrients, thus by feeding a combination of menus you are providing the dog with a broader spectrum of nutrients than one type alone.
- Feeding one type every day could lead to the animal developing an allergy or intolerance towards specific proteins.

However, many dogs have sensitive digestion or existing allergies which may result in them only being fed one or two menus; in these circumstances it is best to feed only the menus that suit the individual rather than risk digestive upset or skin irritation. Which menu suits the sensitive dog is dependent on the individual animal as what suits one, may not necessarily suit another. Addition of probiotics in the diet may help resolve mild digestive allergies or skin complaints as these enhance and improve digestion, which can resolve or reduce inflammatory conditions.

Do I need to supplement the diet if feeding Naturediet?

Naturediet pet foods are complete and balanced, with all the essential nutrients need for health and well-being with no nutritional supplements needed unless advised by your Veterinary surgeon.

Drinking water should always be available and gnawing items provided for tooth and gum hygiene.

We do, however recommend, regular administration of a good probiotic to maintain a healthy digestive environment. Dogs are regularly subjected to substances that whilst beneficial in the whole, can have a negative effect on the 'friendly' bacteria in the gut; medications like flea treatments, wormers, vaccinations are all commonly used on dogs and can disturb the balance of the digestive system. Probiotics are not nutritional and as such are not essential as a supplement but their administration can help manage skin and digestive problems and can only be of benefit in the long term.

Your feeding guide seems excessive in quantity?

The feeding guide provided by Naturediet is based on the recommended daily calorific values for dogs and assumes no other foods are to be fed and that the animal is 'average' in its activities and habits. However, most pet dogs are not subjected to the same stresses and have different lifestyles to the dogs sampled and thus the amount suggested may not be suited to the individual. The actual energy requirement of your dog is dependent on many factors including:

- Age
 - Sex
 - Entire / spayed
 - Activity level
 - Personality (anxious or laid back)
 - Coat type (heavy and thick, short and sparse)
 - Weather (summer or winter)
- Many dogs are also given treats or rewards with nutritional value and these should also be taken into account.

To prevent overfeeding and establish a suitable daily amount for your own dog, you may wish to start feeding at 20% less than stated (10% less for small breeds), observe for weight gain/loss and adjust accordingly to suit the individual dog.

My dog is really sensitive and can only eat Naturediet; is there a treat I can reward him with that won't upset him?

Naturediet do not currently produce a treat, however, it is produced in such a way that further cooking will produce a dry treat.

Cut the Naturediet pate block into suitably sized cubes, arrange individually on a baking sheet and place in a moderate temperature oven; this will evaporate the moisture in the product and result in a crispy cube suitable for reward treats. The temperature and length of time to bake the product at depends on your oven.

My dog is not drinking much water since changing to Naturediet?

Most animals gain 50% of their water requirement from the food they eat as the food cells are 70% moisture and this is absorbed alongside the nutrients and metabolised easily. Naturediet is naturally moist, the only water added is to cook and swell the rice, however, a dry food holds very little moisture and the animal therefore needs to physically drink far more to maintain adequate hydration.

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To improve palatability, many pet foods also contain unnaturally high levels of salt, which increase thirst as it is carried in the blood and affects cell moisture. Naturediet do not add any salt, that present is derived from the all natural ingredients.

A reduction in water consumption is therefore expected when changing to Naturediet.

If water intake needs increasing for any reason, try offering various types of water to establish preference. Tap water, depending on your locality can be highly treated with minerals such as Chlorine and this is detectable by dogs and can be a deterrent to free drinking. Untreated rain or distilled water can be more tempting (many dogs prefer puddles after all) as can running water which makes the minerals less detectable, canine water fountains are available for this purpose. Do NOT use bottled water as these can be fortified and naturally hold excess salts and minerals.

How do I store Naturediet?

Naturediet is presented so its storage need only be cool, dry and out of direct sunlight; the special packaging protects the contents from anything entering or escaping the pack and the nutrient values are guaranteed for 12 months from manufacture.

Once opened, any unused product should be covered and refrigerated and used within 2-3 days. Portions may be frozen to prevent wastage but please be sure to defrost thoroughly before feeding. As with other foods, freezing can result in a slight change to consistency, generally losing its firmness on defrosting though this should not affect palatability.

My dog seems constantly hungry; how can I satisfy his appetite without excess weight gain?

For many dogs, food is a big part of their daily life, especially if they have little mental stimulation and do not have to work for their food; their appetites can be difficult to satisfy without excess weight gain.

It is important to first set a routine and have set times of the day when the main meals are fed, and not allow ad-lib feeding (food always available in bowl).

If your dog 'gobbles' his food then he is likely to feel less satisfied than if the food is consumed slowly – a 'Kong' from your local pet store will help control the speed with which the meal is eaten. Select a 'Kong' of suitable size to put most of their meal into (not a size just for treats) and stuff the hollow with Naturediet; the dog will have no option but to slowly lick the contents out, and as this takes time and effort many dogs sleep following the meal which results in improved digestion and satisfaction.

When offering treats, make the dog work for them; hide and seek of the treat, placing treats in a puzzle ball, as reward for retrieving. This establishes to the dog that they do not get something for nothing and food must be worked for.

Can I recycle Naturediet packaging?

The outer case is a recyclable cardboard and accepted for recycling by local authorities across the UK.

The individual packs are made from recyclable plastics and are recyclable under PS/PE code 07. Facilities for recycling and can be placed in your weekly recyclable collections bins. Due to the firmness of Naturediet the contents can be removed cleanly from the packaging. The design of the individual containers allow them to be stacked inside each other to save space in collection bins.

My dog is overweight, how will feeding Naturediet help when other Light foods have not?

The main reason for dogs being overweight these days is the high level of carbohydrate in many commercial pet foods. Dogs are carnivorous, and in the wild, the only roughage they consume by choice will be the stomach contents of their prey; this has already been acted on by the prey animal's digestive juices and is therefore already partially broken down and easily digested by the dog. Vegetable matter otherwise is generally only eaten if meat is in short supply.

Most commercial dog foods contain high levels of cereals due to their cheaper cost and whilst this satisfies a dogs appetite and they may appear healthy, carbohydrate is easily converted to sugar and fat which can be stored as an energy reserve.

Naturediet only contains minimal levels of carbohydrate with meat protein being the primary source of energy – protein provides expendable energy and is used for muscle repair and development, excess protein in the diet will be eliminated rather than stored. Naturediet is akin to the human 'Atkins' diet and is formulated to mirror that of the wild dog's preferred diet.

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Improvement in muscle tone and definition is often seen just by changing to Naturediet Adult Maintenance diets, though if a good degree of weight loss is needed then Naturediet Senior/Lite, with its reduced fat and higher vegetable content will help facilitate this. To facilitate returning a dog to its ideal weight feed several small meals a day and adjust the amounts to maintain a small but steady weight loss. Exercise is also important. Food equals calories and those which are not utilised for normal maintenance can be stored as fat reserves.

It is extremely important to avoid all biscuits while on a weight loss programme; if treats are needed then select vegetables like raw carrot or broccoli stems, or use small amounts of lean cuts of meat like chicken or turkey.

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