

# Chinese Food Therapy for Dogs and Cats

	<b>Cool/Cold Diets</b>	<b>Warm/Hot Diets</b>	<b>Neutral</b>
Vegetable	Spinach Broccoli Celery Kelp Chinese cabbage Eggplant Cucumber Winter melon	Ginger Garlic Onion Chives Pepper Carrots Squash Pumpkin Asparage	Yam Sweet potato
Fruits/Tea	Watermelon Bitter Melon Pear Banana Sugarcane Ginkgo Chrysanthemum, green tea	Peach Plum Walnut Apricot Citrus Olive Asparagus	Grape Green Pea
Grains/Beans/Oils	Millet Brown Rice Buckwheat Wheat flour Sesame/Flaxseed Oil Barley Barley Sprouts (green) Tofu	Oats White Rice Rice Vinegar Brown Sugar Olive Oil	Corn Sweet Rice Soybean String Beans
Meats	Turkey Cod Rabbit Frog Turtle Clam White Fish	Chicken Shrimp Mutton Deer Meat Beef	Pork Eggs Goose Duck Catfish Salmon Sardine Tripe Quail

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# What should I feed my dog?

Our dog owners commonly ask, “What should I feed my dog?” Choosing your pet's diet can be a difficult task as there are so many choices. Dog owners should assess the activity level, age and current health condition of their pet before choosing or changing the diet. Some of the newer holistic or whole food diets are not recommended for puppies or geriatric dogs. Dogs with special health conditions may have additional needs that should be discussed with your veterinarian.

The dog is a domesticated ancestor of the wolf. Dogs are carnivores. They were designed to eat meat and thrive best on this type of diet. When the dog ate its prey they also ingested some level of greens or grains found in the stomach. The main stay of the diet should be from a meat source.

There are basically three choices when it comes to doggy diets.

**The first is COMMERCIAL diet.** Those are the dry or moist diets that can be found at the grocery or pet stores. They contain grains as their main ingredient, usually corn or wheat. The meat source is typically a meat by-product. Meat by-product can come from a variety of sources but is defined as not fit for human consumption. Depending on the source the protein value can be poor. There is definitely a wide variety of commercial brands but the bottom line is they are usually deficient in meeting your dog's nutritional needs.

**The second choice is a “NATURAL” diet.** These diets can also be dry or moist. The biggest and most beneficial difference is that they don't contain corn or wheat. The meat source is also a better quality. These diets can be found at pet or feed stores. These diets provide better nutrition than the commercial diet. Unfortunately, they are still processed and just because the bag says “natural” on it does not mean it's the best choice.

**The third diet is a WHOLE food diet.** They are made with unprocessed foods. They contain quality meat protein source and are very palatable. They are cooked or raw. Whole food diets can be prepared by you or can be purchased. There are many quality whole food diets that can be purchased at some pet or farm type stores. They are generally fresh or frozen. A whole food diet most resembles what a carnivore would eat. The biggest drawback is the higher cost.

As with people, a dog's health is partially based on a healthy diet. A healthy diet for our dogs is a diet that closely resembles what a carnivore would eat. A natural diet can be supplemented with additional meat, vegetables and eggs. There are numerous whole food diets on the internet or may be obtained from your veterinarian.

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# Chinese herbal medications



In the fall of 2006 a boarding stable in our equine practice lost two horses with in days of each other because of acute liver failure. Several horses on the farm were blood tested and 1 out of 4 had increased liver enzymes. The horses at the stable were voluntarily quarantined and monitored closely.



Several plant samples, water samples, feed samples, and insect samples were sent to the diagnostic lab at Iowa State to determine a cause for the acute liver failure. We monitored the horses closely and gave vitamin B shots and antibiotics to the severe cases. Fortunately only one other horse died, and the rest recovered. Unfortunately, the cause of the incident was undetermined.

As for me, one of the attending veterinarians, the most frustrating aspect about the incident was not being able to treat the horses with any medicine that would specifically target the liver. In our conventional veterinary medicine bag, our arsenal of medications is limited to specific classes of drugs. This particular incident sparked my interest in learning about Chinese acupuncture and herbal therapy.

In the summer of 2007 another farm, located several counties away from the farm previously mentioned, had horses suffering from a syndrome affecting the liver and kidney organs. One mare in particular had very high liver enzymes in her blood profile. When no conventional medicines were available, this mare was treated aggressively with acupuncture and a Chinese herbal formula called Liver Happy. Within two months her blood work was back to normal. I was pleased with this case because we were able to expand our arsenal and offer more treatment options to combat the liver disease.

Herbal Medicine paired with acupuncture has been used for over 2,000 years in China. In fact, over 80% of the cases in Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine (TCVM) are treated with Chinese herbs, or a combination, of herbs and acupuncture. The founder of the Chi Institute in Florida, one of the countries leading TCVM practitioners, considers Chinese herbal therapy as “a daily dose of acupuncture.”

It has been proven that Chinese Herbal Therapy can be extremely effective for treating a variety of medical disorders. New clinical evidence shows that chronic conditions such as gastric ulcers, fatigue, poor digestive function, endocrine dysfunction, chronic cough, asthma, and heaves in horses can not only be treated to restore health, but can also be prevented by utilizing herbal medicine.

There are several Chinese Herbs that I have personally witnessed as being highly effective in relieving pain, calming down nervous horses, and improving health, fertility and performance. Body Sore is one formulation that invigorates the blood, or Qi to relieve pain and increase circulation. It has been useful in treating horses suffering from trauma, arthritis, joint and muscle disorders. In fact, several barrel racers that used this formulation have seen improvements in their horses. The horses are running faster and turning the barrels sharper, which has shaved seconds off of their pattern time. There is another formulation, Tendon Ligament Formulation, which targets the repair and aids to strengthen tendons and ligaments. I have prescribed this formulation to race horses with strained suspensory ligaments and bowed tendons. In my experience the horses on this combination seem to heal faster

and stronger than without the herb.

Behavioral problems can be treated with Shen Calmer. This formulation is designed to ease separation anxiety, mental stress, fearfulness, and out of control behavior episodes. There are also herb formulations that can aide in controlling heat cycles in performance mares, and increase fertility in mares with a history of being difficult to breed.

The herbal formulations may take several days, perhaps even weeks to show a clinical improvement, depending on the severity of the condition being treated. The herbs come in a powder form that can be top dressed over the grain. Most horses will readily eat the formulations, while a few finicky eaters may need some assistance. Syrup, molasses, or applesauce will usually help to conceal the taste and texture.

Because the herbs affect body organisms and systems, there could be unwanted side effects if used improperly. Chinese herbs can have powerful effects and should be considered as if they were drugs, thus used with caution. Many Chinese herbal formulas sold to the public are not safe due to impurities. The Chinese herbs that I prescribe are carefully formulated by TCVM veterinarians at Jing Tang Herbal in Florida. The formulations are safe and effective when used as prescribed. They are also guaranteed to be drug test free at a performance event.

I have found that after a thorough examination and treatment with a combination of acupuncture and chiropractic therapy for the specific condition, the Chinese herbal medications prescribed will amplify and prolong the affects of the acupuncture therapy. In addition, Chinese herbal formulations may be prescribed for long term as a preventative and to enhance performance.