



# Animal Clinic of Chardon

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JUNE 2017 NEWSLETTER



## Did you know?

*According to the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention, 53% of adult dogs and 55% of cats in the US are obese or overweight.*

*If your pet is overweight or obese, it can cause arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, kidney disease, certain cancers, heart and respiratory disease, and other problems.*

*22% of dog owners and 15% of cat owners said their pet's weight was normal when it was actually overweight or obese.*

*According to the Purina Lifespan Study, obesity takes almost two years off a dog's life.*

## Special Deals!

### Heartgard

Buy 12 doses, get a \$12 rebate

## Grain-Free Diets – Big on marketing, Small on truth

Are you feeding a grain-free diet to your pet? Grain-free diets are one of the largest growing segments of the pet food market right now. More and more pet owners are reaching for these diets, which are billed as more natural for pets and less likely to cause health problems and allergies. **It all sounds great... except that it's not true!**

There is no reliable evidence that suggests that it is harmful to feed grains as a group to dogs or cats.

Whole grains, rather than being "fillers", can contribute valuable nutrients including vitamins, minerals, essential fatty acids, and fiber to diets. Some grain products even provide protein that is easier for your pet to digest than some protein from meat. Even refined grains such as white rice can be beneficial for health depending on the type of diet and the pet. The vast majority of dogs (and cats!) are very efficient (>90%) at digesting and utilizing nutrients from grains in amounts typically found in pet foods.



While food allergies in pets are uncommon, allergies to grains are even rarer. The small number of pets that do have allergies are most likely to be allergic to animal proteins such as chicken, beef, and dairy (which reflects how common these ingredients have traditionally been in commercial diets rather than an increased tendency to cause allergies). Gluten intolerance is also exceedingly rare in pets, with gastrointestinal signs from consuming gluten having been confirmed only in one inbred family of Irish Setters.

It is important to keep in mind that grain-free diets can vary widely in terms of their nutritional profiles including protein, fat, calories, and other nutrients. Some grain-free diets are lower in carbohydrates, which means that they can be quite high in both fat and calories. Other grain-free diets merely substitute similar amounts of highly refined starches such as those from potatoes or tapioca (cassava) in place of grains. These ingredients may provide fewer nutrients and less fiber than whole grains, while costing more. Other companies use ingredients such as peas, beans, or lentils in place of the grains to provide carbohydrates, but these ingredients are not necessarily any better for your pet than grains and may cause digestive upset in some pets.

The bottom line is that "grain-free" is a marketing concept designed to sell pet food, not a health solution to help your pet live a long, healthy

## Heartgard & Nexgard

Buy 12 doses of Heartgard and 6 doses of Nexgard, get a \$25 rebate

Buy 12 doses of Heartgard and 12 doses of Nexgard, get a \$50 rebate

## Nexgard

Buy 3 doses, get 1 free  
Buy 6 doses, get 2 free  
(can be combined with above rebate)

## Revolution

Buy 6 doses, get 2 free  
Buy 9 doses, get 3 free

## Win a Yeti Cooler!

For every box of Nexgard(6 doses) or Heartgard(12 doses), you get a chance to win a Yeti Roadie Cooler!



Need medications? Food? Heartworm, flea and tick preventatives? Visit our [online store](#) and have your purchase conveniently shipped to your home!

*Planning a summer vacation? Let us take care of your pet! We offer all-inclusive service and will treat your family member like our own!*

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## 3 Pet Food Label Myths

With so many pet food options, choosing the right diet can be tricky. As your veterinary team, we can help you select the best foods based on our experience with many pets, ignoring the blizzard of marketing ploys designed to appeal to your emotional needs rather than your pets' nutritional needs.

**Myth 1:** Foods labeled premium are always better for your pet.

**Truth:** Some premium food companies may call out other manufacturers for using ingredients like corn or meat meals, knowing full well that pets do not need ingredients; they need the nutrients that are contained in ingredients. The nutrients contained in those ingredients are more important than the ingredients themselves. Manufacturers, nutritionists and pet owners simply can't predict a food's performance based on its ingredient list. There are too many unknowns: the amount of the ingredient present in the food, the quality of the ingredient or the exact identity and nutrient composition of the ingredient.

**Myth 2:** The best food for your pet is one that lists real meat as the first ingredient.

**Truth:** Some manufacturers also make unsubstantiated claims about ingredients and manipulate their own ingredient lists. For example, some dry food manufacturers tout real chicken, fish or beef as their first ingredient because the food contains more of this ingredient by weight than any other ingredient. What they don't say is that "real meat" is mostly water weight, which is removed when the food is made, moving it way down the ingredient list. They also neglect to mention that the technical term for "real meat" is mechanically deboned meat, also known as "white slime!"

**Myth 3:** The order of the ingredients is the most important factor in selecting your pet's diet.

**Truth:** Another trick some manufacturers play is called ingredient splitting, where they will list different carbohydrates separately—corn, rice, barley, wheat or oatmeal, for example—or list out different forms of the same carbohydrate, such as ground wheat and wheat flour, so these individual carbs appear lower in the ingredient list. Doing so makes it appear as if carbohydrates are not the first ingredient.

**Fact:** Your veterinarian chooses your pet's food based on your pet's physical exam, lifestyle,



## Nutrition Facts

Serving Size

Amount Per Serving

Calories

% Daily Values\*

**Meat.** Muscle tissue that may or may not include fat and portions of the skin, sinew, nerve and blood vessels.

**Meat byproducts.** Most of the parts of the animal other than the muscle tissue, including familiar parts such as livers, kidneys and tripe, but also udders and lungs.

**Poultry.** The parts of the bird you would find if you purchased a whole chicken or turkey at the grocery store. This likely includes backs and necks and may include bone, which can serve as a source of calcium.

**Poultry byproducts.** This includes most of the parts that are not included in a dressed bird such as the heart, gizzard and liver, but also other internal organs, heads and feet.

**Meat meal.** This is a product made from mammal tissues that have been subject to cooking to destroy any harmful bacteria and to remove most of the water and fat, leaving primarily protein and minerals. Meal products are ground to form uniform sized particles.

**Meat and Bone Meal.** Similar to meat meal, but contains added bone.

**Animal Byproduct Meal.** Similar to meat meal and meat and bone meal, but may include additional byproducts.

**Poultry Byproduct Meal.** Essentially the same as "poultry byproducts," but in rendered form.

**Poultry Meal.** Rendered part of the whole carcass and skin with or without accompanying bone.

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the subject.*

medical condition and other factors related to your pet's health. So before you reach for the food you heard about on a commercial, call your veterinary team first for a recommendation tailored to your pet.