

Summer Fun, Nutrition & Exercise! June, 2010

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I use to have to volumes, on and off. At 90 years old in dog years, I have three things I love—wake-up, pee, poop, eat and take short little walks! I was born deaf, so I love to sniff, and that still works! Casidy ~



~The jury is in on this: healthy nutrition, exercise and de-stressing contribute to a longer life for dogs and humans. Add a dose of deep breathing, centering and shielding yourself from allowing too many negative emotions / energy from entering in takes on a whole new meaning. We can be aware, help others, make a difference and have integrity without depleting all of our own energy!

Summer fun with our dogs is a time to carefully enjoy energy! Our dogs sweat through the pads of their paws and toxins release through their pads, skin and fur. Their normal body temp is about 101.5 to 102.2. They can overheat in about 10 minutes, reaching body temps of about 102. In 30 minutes it can go to 106 (very dangerous - *heatstroke*). In a few minutes, locked in hot car or other confining area, they can suffer brain damage or die.

While engaging in summer sports, biking, walking and hiking, be sure your dog has water available and healthy snacks. Observe them! Panting and bulging eyes are a good sign that they need to cool down, but most dogs will keep right on going to please US.

Dogs kept outdoors need extra-special attention, particularly geriatric dogs. They MUST have shelter and water or be kept inside where it is cooler. **A kid's plastic swimming pool makes a great mini-pool and cooling spot for dogs.**

ACTIVITY

There are many fun things you can enjoy with your dogs in the summer, as long as the dog is conditioned, kept cool and the activity is age-appropriate.

Like humans, a 10 year old dog cannot withstand a 10-mile hike up Mt. Liberty unless they have been conditioned for it. In dog years, this is 65-70 years old! Many 70 year olds and UP— are active today. Enjoy, but be mindful of warming up, conditioning, and taking rests.

One of my dog's favorite activities is swimming. The older dog weighs a life preserver. All dogs should if they are boating, and or on leash, especially if you have a Newfoundland, who instinctively wants to save ducks.

Be respectful! If you are enjoying summer fun on the

beach, at parks and lakes, read the guidelines and pick up after your dog. The old saying still holds true: one jerk spoils it for the rest of us. That's my version!

Plastic swimming pools make inexpensive ways for dogs to have fun (finding weighted socks and balls) and cool off. Check out [Pet Edge](#) for a pool made with bottom drainage, so you don't have to bail it out.

SUMMER DIET

We are often asked what we feed our dogs in the summer. Should we make summer time adjustments? If they are housed outside for long periods, have a bucket of ice and/or a more expensive water cooling system available, along with adequate shade. Hook pails to fences so then do not inadvertently get knocked over, leaving the dog without hydration. Be mindful of leaving any kind of food out for long periods because it can spoil in the heat.

As long as dogs are doing well on whatever diet you have them on, and their activity level remains about the same, there is no need to change their diet. You know your dog's lifestyle better than anyone. If hot summer months mean less activity, then common sense says less food / calories will sustain them. As with us, these should be healthy calories with a nice mix of protein, complex carbohydrates, a little fat and lots of veggies and fruits. I crush veggies for

my dogs, but each one is particular about what kind of fruit they like. Some prefer a piece of banana, while another likes nectarines. No grapes, onions or raw garlic—as this can be toxic in large quantity depending on the size of your dog—check out [VetInfo](#).

Fuel your dog to meet the needs of activity & energy output!

We are often asked what we feed our dogs when hike or travel. We adhere to the “no diet change” when travelling and feed them less. On hikes or walks, if we know we are going to away for a few hours, we bring our healthy snacks and theirs in a cooler strapped to our backpacks.

For daily meals, we adhere to a rotation diet, with additional healthy portions added in weekly depending on what we are eating and what looks fresh (and colorful) at the market (salmon, tilapia, chicken, turkey, veggies). Each should be adjusted according to the dog’s needs and stage of life.

Essentially, if we eat healthy, we can share some of this good stuff with our dogs like organic eggs, low or no fat yogurt and sardines, chicken and turkey breast, and a feast of bison or beef marrow bones.

Solid wisdom is to educate yourself, observe your dog and make changes that seem appropriate. Adding in omega 3’s, and rotating oils (extra virgin olive oil,

flaxseed) may help. Refer to [Whole-Dog-Journal](#) and [Animal Wellness](#).

Talk with your Veterinarian. Hopefully, they are wise enough to have both holistic and medical advice. If not, search around, you have the prerogative. If someone tells me to absolutely not do this or that, and intuitively I feel twinge in my gut, I always ask them “is this true, and can you direct me to information that proves that this is true?”

Don’t be fearful of exploring variety, information or changing your dog’s diet and behavior. It would be like us eating the same thing every day, while our teeth & hair are falling out from lack of vitamins and nutrients. It is impossible for one meal, or dog kibble, to give us or our dog’s complete nutrition. It is impossible for one person, group (including health and wellness professionals) to have all the “right” answers.

As experienced as we are, I truly believe that living and learning with our dogs creates opportunities to grow and glow. They help us live longer!

G.L.O.W. (grateful, learning, observing, wisdom)

Journey to [Dog Talk](#), click on [Nutrition](#) and [Library](#) for helpful resources.

Support local distributors whenever possible. This helps to save the planet—

In summary, you can enjoy summer fun, healthy diet and

exercise that are in tune with you and your dog’s fitness level. We can make easy seasonal changes that enhances are overall well-being.

Be mindful of the hot summer sun, and ensure that dogs, like us humans, warm-up before more intense activity.

There are so many benefits of spending some summer time with our dogs, like socialization. Dog walking is one of the best desensitizing tools for pups and adult dogs.

Walking in the earlier morning or later afternoon, when the sun goes down, is bliss for most dogs. Allow them, on cue, to sniff and enjoy the smells. They have olfactory cells 75 times greater than ours. They sniff in technicolor. It is mentally stimulating for them.

You get to spend quality time with your dog meeting different cultures, sights, sounds and smells. Quality time is a “choice”. For some it may be 5-minutes—others 2-hours.

Have careful fun this summer by simply adjusting what you do with your dogs! Changing can be a good thing.

Training and walking with your dog can change your life!

[Local Harvest](#)

[Certified Humane](#)

[Eat Wild](#)

[Eat Well guide](#)

Enjoy the Journey!