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† BASED ON THE NUMBER OF LACTOBACILLUS GG CLINICAL STUDIES, AS OF JULY 2013.



ASK THE VET

I'm adopting a puppy soon.

What's the best type of diet?

You're wise to wonder about food for your furry friend: "The single most important thing pet owners can do for their animals' health is pay attention to what they feed them," says Wilmington, NC-based veterinarian Ernie Ward, D.V.M., founder of the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention. This means watching out for too many treats, of course, but also choosing the best chow.

Start by asking your vet's advice. Age and breed will certainly affect her suggestions, but so will your daily routine. "If you only have 10 minutes a day to devote to dog walking or you know your cat's not getting a lot of exercise, be honest about it—don't exaggerate," says Ward, who notes that inactive or already overweight pets may need a special low-carb, high-protein diet. Your vet can also help you decide whether to feed your pet dry or wet food (or both), and can address other concerns—if you're gluten-free, for example, she can help you decide if your new companion should follow similar guidelines.

Ward recommends pet foods without artificial flavorings or colors, and he favors whole ingredients over "chicken by-product meal," which can contain ground-up organs and bones that aren't as easily digestible as muscle meat. (Three brands that fit those criteria: Wellness Natural Pet Food, Nutro Max, and Hill's Science Diet.) Gradually introduce your pet to new kibble

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4 Hour in the morning when lung function is at its worst. If you have asthma, always keep an emergency inhaler by your bed. Common attack triggers include dry winter air and colds.

SOURCE: TIMOTHY CRAIG, D.O., PENN STATE MILTON S. HERSHEY MEDICAL CENTER

Photograph by Brian Steege