

Coconut Oil for Dogs and Cats

Coconut Oil Benefits

Coconut oil offers many health benefits for dogs and cats ranging from moisturizing and healing dry, cracked pads to helping promote healthy bones and joints and fight diseases like heart diseases and diabetes. Coconut oil is also anti-bacterial, anti-viral, anti-parasitic and anti-fungal and offers a host of benefits related to these valuable properties. Many nutritionists and holistic physicians believe that both people and pets should use coconut oil in their diets regularly.

In addition to its many other health benefits, coconut oil is reported to be:

- Anti-bacterial - Can help kill harmful bacteria and fight infection
- Anti-viral - Can help kill harmful viruses that cause illness
- Anti-fungal - Can help eliminate ringworm, candidiasis, and yeast infections.
- Anti-parasitic - Can help kill tapeworms, lice, giardia and other parasites.

Finding the best coconut oil for dogs and cats

For all of the healthy benefits it's important to choose quality coconut oil for yourself and for your pet. As with anything else you give your pet, it's best to find organic and non-GMO (non-genetically-modified) coconut oil whenever possible. Always choose unrefined oil, also described as virgin oil. The cold-pressed method is best.

Different brand of coconut oil will have different tastes ranging from a bland taste, to a strong coconut taste, to a more buttery taste.

Feeding dogs and cats coconut oil

Solid or liquid coconut oil can be added to food at any meal or given between meals. Solid coconut oil can easily be melted quickly in hot water.

A general guideline for the optimal dose for dogs is about 1 teaspoon per 10 pounds of body weight daily, or about 1 tablespoon per 30 pounds, but don't start with these amounts in the beginning! Large amounts of coconut oil given to a dog can cause diarrhea or greasy stools while his body adjusts to the change in diet.

Start with small amounts, such as ¼ teaspoon per day for small dogs or puppies and 1 teaspoon for large dogs, or even just a dab if your dog's constitution is sensitive. If your dog seems tired or uncomfortable or has diarrhea, just cut back the amount temporarily. Gradually increase the amount every few days. It may also be helpful to give the small amounts of coconut oil in divided doses throughout the day.

Because coconut oil kills bacteria, viruses, parasites, yeasts, and fungi, your pet may respond negatively to the detox aspect of taking coconut oil. Signs of detoxing too rapidly may include lethargy, headaches, flu-like symptoms, fatigue, and diarrhea. Coconut oil is best given with food.

Most dogs like the taste of coconut oil so you won't have trouble feeding it to them. If you apply it to their skin and they try to lick it off, try wrapping the skin in a rag or towel for a few minutes to let the oil soak in before they get a chance to lick it off. For cats, just put a dab of coconut oil on their paw before or after meals. They'll lick it off!