

Nurse To
Nature



Natural health for real
families.

Canine Health

Healthy Choices For Happy Pups

Introduction

Nourishing Your Dog Naturally

A Gentle Guide to Healthier Food & Treats

At *Nurse to Nature*, we believe that wellness extends to every member of your household—including your four-legged companions. Just as we detox our homes and clean up our diets, it's time we take a closer look at what's filling our dogs' bowls.

This guide is here to help you explore simple, nourishing shifts you can make to support your pet's health—from decoding labels to discovering treats that are as wholesome as they are tail-waggingly delicious. You'll learn how to spot unwanted additives, choose cleaner options, and bring a little more nature into your dog's daily routine.

Because a healthy home is one where *everyone* thrives. And that includes the furry ones who greet us with joy, loyalty, and love.

The information provided is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

Pillar 1: Dog Food

Top Grain-Free, Corn-Free Dog Food Options

Canidae PURE Salmon & Sweet Potato

- Salmon, sweet potatoes, peas
- Dry format
- Great for sensitive stomachs

Blue Buffalo Freedom Chicken Recipe

- Real chicken, no by-products
- No corn, wheat, or soy
- Wet format for picky eaters

Kasiks Grain-Free Chicken Formula

- Chicken, coconut, kale
- Dry format
- Potato-free, high in fiber

The Honest Kitchen Grain-Free Turkey Recipe

- Dehydrated turkey, veggies
- Easy prep for all dog sizes

Merrick Grain-Free Chicken Canned Food

- 96% meat
- Added DHA, omega-3 & 6
- Wet format for active dogs

Tally's Ranch Freeze-Dried Chicken Recipe

- Chicken, chicken liver, flaxseed
- Nutrient-dense and shelf-stable

Redbarn Grain-Free Sky Recipe

- Turkey, duck, sweet potato
- High-protein dry food for heart health

Tender & True Salmon & Sweet Potato

- Salmon, whiting meal, sweet potato
- Omega-rich for small breeds

Open Farm Harvest Chicken Pâté

- Chicken, spinach, carrots
- Wet food ideal for senior dogs
- Ethically sourced ingredients

Diamond Naturals Grain-Free Beef & Sweet Potato

- Real pasture-raised beef, lamb meal, sweet potatoes
- Dry format with added probiotics
- Supports digestion, skin, and coat health
- Great for dogs with grain sensitivities

Corn Meal in Dog Food - Understanding the Facts:

Corn meal is a frequently used ingredient in commercial dog food. While it offers carbohydrates, its overall nutritional contribution is a subject of discussion. Some argue it's a cheap filler, while others acknowledge its role as an energy source. Understanding the facts helps you make informed decisions for your dog's diet.

Research Findings:

- A common filler in many dog foods
- Provides carbohydrates for energy
- Nutritional value is debated

Pros:

- Source of carbohydrates for energy
- Relatively inexpensive ingredient

Cons:

- Potential allergen for some dogs
- Lower nutritional value compared to whole meats and vegetables
- Can contribute to digestive issues in sensitive dogs

Why Go Grain-Free & Corn-Free?

- Fewer allergens = healthier skin & digestion
- Meat-focused recipes boost energy and muscle
 - Avoids fillers and artificial additives
 - Supports coat health with omega-3s

Pillar 2: Treats & Add-Ins

Natural Chews & Protein Boosters

Trachea (Beef or Lamb)

- **Benefits:** Rich in glucosamine and chondroitin for joint health; promotes dental hygiene through chewing.
- **Serving:** 1 piece (3–7 inches) 2–3 times per week.
- **Note:** Supervise chewing to avoid choking, especially with small dogs.

Bully Sticks

- **Benefits:** High-protein, single-ingredient chew that supports dental health and satisfies chewing instincts.
- **Serving:** 1 stick every few days; choose size appropriate to dog's weight.
- **Note:** Monitor for calorie intake—each stick can be 80–100+ calories.

Freeze-Dried Liver

- **Benefits:** Nutrient-dense source of iron, vitamin A, and B vitamins; excellent for training.
- **Serving:** 1–2 small pieces per 10 lbs of body weight per day.
- **Note:** Too much liver can cause vitamin A toxicity—use sparingly.

Herbal & Anti-Inflammatory Boosters

Turmeric

- **Benefits:** Anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, supports joint and immune health.
- **Serving:** ¼ tsp per 10 lbs of body weight, mixed with a healthy fat (like coconut oil) for absorption.
- **Note:** Start slow; monitor for GI upset.

Garlic (Fresh, Minced)

Pantry Add-Ins for Meals

Coconut Oil

Benefits:

- Supports skin and coat health
- Aids digestion and nutrient absorption
- Antibacterial, antifungal, and antiviral properties
- May boost energy and brain function

Serving Guidelines:

- Start with ¼ tsp per 10 lbs of body weight, once daily
- Gradually increase to ½–1 tsp per 10 lbs, if well tolerated
- Mix into meals or freeze into bone broth cubes for easy portioning

Notes:

- Use organic, virgin, cold-pressed coconut oil
- Monitor for loose stools or signs of fat sensitivity
- Avoid in dogs with pancreatitis or on low-fat diets

Peanut Butter (Unsweetened, Xylitol-Free)

- **Benefits:** High in protein and healthy fats; great for enrichment toys.
- **Serving:** ½ tsp per 10 lbs of body weight, up to 3x/week.
- **Note:** Choose natural brands with no added sugar or salt.

Raw Egg

- **Benefits:** Complete protein with biotin, selenium, and fatty acids; supports coat and muscle health.
- **Serving:** 1 raw egg (including shell if crushed) 1–2x/week for medium to large dogs.
- **Note:** Introduce slowly; some dogs may have sensitivities.

Salmon (Cooked or Freeze-Dried)

- **Benefits:** Omega-3s for skin, coat, joints, and brain health.
- **Serving:** 1 oz cooked salmon per 20 lbs of body weight, 2–3x/week.

- **Benefits:** Natural flea repellent, immune support, antibacterial.
- **Serving:** | Dog Weight | Max Garlic/Day
 - 10 lbs | ¼ clove
 - 20 lbs | ½ clove
 - 30–40 lbs | ¾ clove
 - 50–60 lbs | 1 clove
- **Caution:** Too much garlic can be toxic—stick to safe amounts and avoid garlic powder. After minced, allow to sit for 15 minutes to activate.

Ginger (Fresh or Powdered)

- **Benefits:** Aids digestion, reduces nausea, anti-inflammatory.
- **Serving:** ¼ tsp per 10 lbs of body weight, 2–3x/week.
- **Note:** Great for senior dogs or those with sensitive stomachs.

Boost your dog's nutrition with these whole-food add-ins:

- **Pumpkin Puree:** Aids digestion and provides fiber.
- **Blueberries:** Rich in antioxidants.
- **Plain Yogurt:** Probiotic source for gut health.
- **Cooked Sweet Potato:** Source of Vitamin A & fiber.

- **Note:** Avoid raw salmon due to parasite risk; use wild-caught when possible.

Bone Broth & Functional Cubes

Bone Broth

- **Benefits:** Collagen-rich; supports joints, digestion, and hydration.
- **Serving:** 1–2 tbsp per 20 lbs of body weight, daily or as needed.
- **Note:** Use low-sodium, homemade or pet-safe commercial options.

Frozen Bone Broth Cubes

- **Benefits:** Easy portioning; great for summer hydration and enrichment.
- **Serving:** 1 cube per 20 lbs of body weight.
- **Tip:** Add turmeric or ginger to cubes for extra anti-inflammatory support.

How to Use These Add-Ins

- **Rotate** ingredients weekly to avoid overloading any one nutrient.
- **Mix** into meals, stuff into enrichment toys, or freeze into cubes.
- **Observe** your dog's response—every pup is unique!

Pillar 3: Skin & Coat

Natural Flea Repellent Sprays

DIY Herbal Spray

- **Ingredients:**
 - 1 cup water
 - 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
 - 5 drops each: lavender, peppermint, cedarwood essential oils
- **Usage:**
 - Spray on coat (avoiding eyes), bedding, and collars
 - Use **daily during flea season** or after outdoor play
- **Benefits:** Repels fleas naturally, soothes skin, and smells fresh

Citrus & Rosemary Spray

- **Ingredients:**
 - 1 sliced lemon
 - 1 sprig fresh rosemary
 - 2 cups boiling water
- **Instructions:**
 - Steep overnight, strain, and pour into spray bottle
 - Apply to coat and bedding
- **Benefits:** Natural flea deterrent with calming properties
- **Cedar Oil Spray (Store-Bought or DIY)**
- **Benefits:** Kills fleas on contact, repels ticks and mosquitoes
- **Usage:** Mist lightly on coat and bedding; avoid eyes
- **Note:** Some dogs may be sensitive to cedar—patch test first

Topical & Internal Boosters for Skin, Immunity & Pest Control

Banixx Spray

- **Benefits:** Antibacterial & antifungal; treats hot spots, ringworm, ear infections, wounds, and itchy skin
- **Usage:** Spray directly on affected area **2–3x daily** for 6–8 days or as needed
- **Safe For:** Dogs, cats, horses, and more; non-toxic, odorless, and sting-free
- **Tip:** Great for sensitive skin and recurring fungal issues

Coconut Oil + Oil of Oregano (Diluted Blend)

- **Benefits:**
 - Coconut oil supports skin, coat, and digestion
 - Oregano oil adds antimicrobial, antifungal, and immune-boosting properties

How to Prepare:

- Mix **1 drop of oregano oil** into **1 tsp of organic virgin coconut oil**
- Use as a **topical rub**

- **Caution:**

- Always dilute oregano oil—undiluted can cause irritation
- Avoid use in puppies under 8 weeks or pregnant dogs
- Monitor for skin sensitivity

Notes: _____

Next Steps

Next Steps:

Start by swapping in one grain-free food or natural treat your dog will love. Rotate add-ins like bone broth, turmeric, or coconut oil to boost wellness gently. Watch your pup's response—shiny coat, better digestion, and happy energy are great signs! Try herbal flea sprays or nourishing chews like trachea or liver. Keep your guide close to build a routine that grows with your dog's needs. Small shifts, big tail wags.

Remember to consult with your veterinarian prior to making any changes.