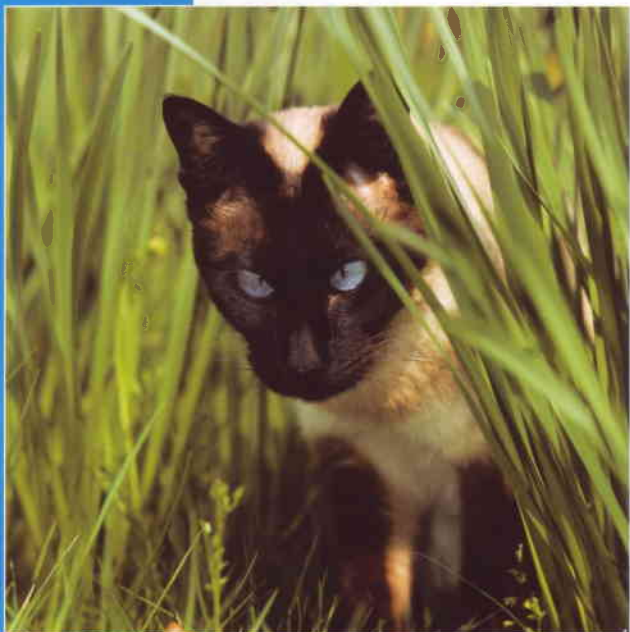




Dietary Sensitivity



This Brochure
courtesy of

Hollyoak
Veterinary Surgery

IMPINGTON

01223 232111

What is dietary sensitivity?

Dietary sensitivity is a general term used to describe an adverse reaction to food. There are two main forms of sensitivity:

- Food allergy, or hypersensitivity, which occurs when the body has an immune reaction to a particular ingredient (the allergen).
- Food intolerance is when the dietary sensitivity has some other cause than an immune reaction.

The clinical signs of dietary sensitivity are usually digestive upsets or skin irritation, and although not life-threatening, these can adversely affect a pet's quality of life.

The mechanisms by which dietary sensitivity occurs are complex, but in cases of food allergy, the allergen that triggers the reaction is almost always a protein. Once developed, an allergy may last a lifetime and so removing the offending ingredient from the diet is the key to overcoming dietary sensitivity.

Factors that can cause or increase the risk of dietary sensitivity include:

FOOD

The most common food allergens for dogs are beef, milk products and wheat; in cats they are beef, milk products and fish.

OTHER DAMAGE

Inflammation, infection, surgery and some types of drugs can damage the digestive tract and increase the possibility of dietary sensitivity.

AGE

Dietary sensitivity is more common in early life and the severity of allergic reactions is greater in younger pets.

BREED

Certain breeds appear more likely to develop dietary sensitivity, including Siamese cats, West Highland White Terriers, Cocker Spaniels, and because of gluten sensitivity, Irish Setters.

Recognising the signs of dietary sensitivity

There are a variety of signs that your pet may be suffering from dietary sensitivity.

Signs of dietary sensitivity:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Flatulence
- Frequent scratching, scurfiness and hair loss
- Inflamed, reddened skin
- Poor growth in young pets
- Sometimes poor appetite and lethargy
- Sometimes coughing, wheezing and sneezing

IMPORTANT

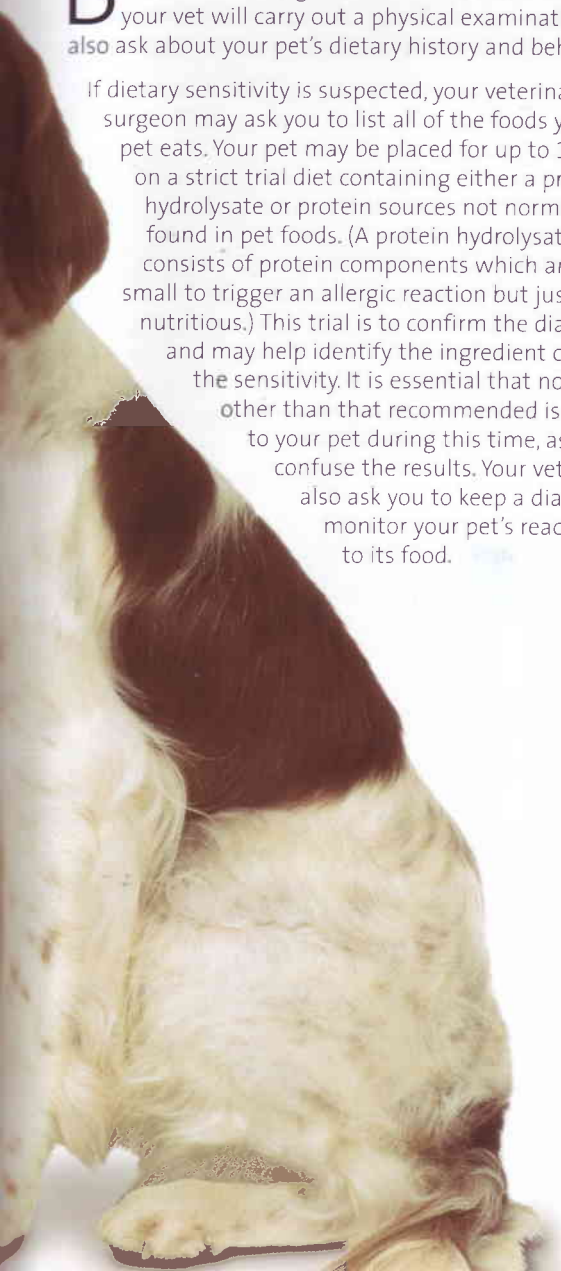
Some signs of dietary sensitivity are similar to those of other serious conditions. If you suspect that your pet may be suffering from dietary sensitivity, consult your veterinary surgeon as soon as possible.



Diagnosis

Because the signs of dietary sensitivity are often difficult to distinguish from other conditions, your vet will carry out a physical examination and also ask about your pet's dietary history and behaviour.

If dietary sensitivity is suspected, your veterinary surgeon may ask you to list all of the foods your pet eats. Your pet may be placed for up to 10 weeks on a strict trial diet containing either a protein hydrolysate or protein sources not normally found in pet foods. (A protein hydrolysate consists of protein components which are too small to trigger an allergic reaction but just as nutritious.) This trial is to confirm the diagnosis and may help identify the ingredient causing the sensitivity. It is essential that no food other than that recommended is given to your pet during this time, as it can confuse the results. Your vet may also ask you to keep a diary to monitor your pet's reaction to its food.



Management and control of pets with dietary sensitivity

Your veterinary surgeon will recommend changing your pet's food to avoid the cause of the sensitivity and prevent its recurrence. A special food may also be advised to help avoid the development of an allergy during gastrointestinal disease.



Hill's*
Prescription Diet*
Canine z/d*
ULTRA Allergen-
Free, Canine z/d*
Low Allergen
and Feline z/d*
Low Allergen

are dry foods containing a specially-prepared protein hydrolysate.



Hill's* Prescription Diet* Canine d/d* and Feline d/d* canned and dry foods contain a limited number of protein sources that are not often used in pet foods.

Feeding the appropriate food from these ranges to your dog or cat can help nutritionally manage and avoid dietary sensitivity. They are complete canned and dry foods that are suitable for the long-term maintenance of pets needing a food that controls dietary sensitivity.



Owner's checklist

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- ✓ Because the ingredient causing dietary sensitivity may occur in a variety of different products, ensure you give only the food recommended by your vet

- ✓ Do not feed table scraps or tidbits

- ✓ Avoid your pet scavenging or being fed by people not aware of your pet's special diet

- ✓ Ensure that a supply of clean, fresh water is always available

- ✓ If signs of the condition recur, do not hesitate to contact your vet

FEEDING GUIDE

All Hill's products are extremely palatable foods that are eagerly accepted by most pets. However, when suffering from dietary sensitivity your pet may have a reduced appetite or be less willing to eat. If your pet does resist a change of food, the following tips may help:

- Introduce the new food gradually – mix it with your pet's usual food, adding more of it each day until you have completed the change-over
- Warm canned food to body temperature – but no hotter – before feeding
- If your pet refuses to eat for more than 48 hours, discuss the problem with your vet

Remember our food is 100% Guaranteed – we promise complete satisfaction or we buy it back.



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