



Whether you have a rambunctious athlete who jogs with you, or a gentle giant who prefers to join you on the couch, big dogs are a joy to have in your life!

These big dogs have big appetites and very different dietary needs than smaller breed dogs.

To provide the best possible care to your large dog, here are some things to think about:

## **The Special Dietary Needs of Large Breed Dogs**

When it comes to size, the difference between small and large dogs can be colossal.

Just imagine a Teacup Yorkshire Terrier, a breed that averages merely 2-3 pounds in weight and compare this tiny dog to a Mastiff, a giant breed that can weigh closer to 200 pounds. That's nearly a 100-times difference in size!

If your pup is on the larger end of the scale (50 pounds or more), they have dietary needs that differ from their smaller counterparts.

### **What's Unique About Big Dogs? (And How Does a Large Breed Diet Help?)**

#### ***Stomach***

The bigger the dog, the bigger their stomach: these large breeds need a larger amount of food to feel full. However, it's not appropriate to just feed a larger amount of a small-dog diet. Here's why.

#### ***Metabolism***

Big dogs have a lower metabolic rate than smaller dogs, which can make them prone to weight gain. Weight gain can then exacerbate a big dog's pre-existing risk for arthritis and other joint problems.

Food designed for large breed dogs is generally less calorie dense than food for smaller breeds. Your big dog can eat a larger quantity to fill their larger stomach, but still receive an appropriate amount of calories.

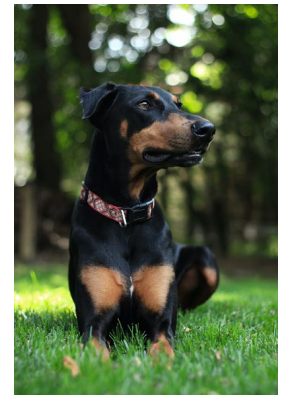
#### ***Digestive Transit Time***

Large dogs have a longer digestive transit times—particularly in their colons, where bacteria ferment the food. This increased fermentation time can result in more water in the colon, and thus watery stools.

For this reason, large breed diets are formulated with more non-fermentable fiber, for normal stool consistency and frequency.

#### ***Joint Care***

Big dogs are prone to developing joint problems such as arthritis or hip dysplasia because of their large bones and the amount of body weight these larger bones and joints support.



Proper large breed nutrition can keep muscles and bones in good shape and promote a healthy body weight, which in turn reduces pressure on the joints.

Another benefit of large breed diets is that they often contain supportive ingredients for joint health, such as chicken or pork cartilage, or even omega fatty acids.

These ingredients provide the building blocks to help strengthen joint tissues and decrease inflammation.

## Other Feeding Considerations for Big Dogs

### **Risk of Bloat**

Gastric dilatation and volvulus—also known as GDV or bloat—is a medical condition in which the stomach twists and then expands as gasses are trapped inside. This condition requires an emergency surgery, and can be fatal in a matter of hours.

Unfortunately, large and giant breed dogs—especially those with deep chests—are at a higher risk than small dogs.

While risk factors are largely genetic, there are some measures you can take at home that may help minimize the risk of this condition, including:

- Feed several smaller meals throughout the day—avoid feeding just one large meal
- Don't allow vigorous exercise for one hour before and after a meal



### **Ask How Much To Feed**

Preventing obesity is an important part of keeping your big dog healthy. So, ask us for a feeding recommendation and guideline.

Individual metabolic systems vary between animals, so use this feeding amount as a starting point, then monitor your pup's weight and make adjustments as needed.

Also, ask about healthy treats and a maximum daily treat allowance.

### **What If Another Diet is Recommended?**

In some cases, a weight control or senior diet may be recommended instead of an adult large breed food. These foods help control calorie intake and are supplemented with l-carnitine to help aid in the utilization of fatty acids.

### **What About Large Breed Puppies?**

Compared to their small breed counterparts, large breed puppies have a lot of growing to do! Giant breeds may grow until two years of age—although the most rapid growth will occur in their first year of life.

Growing large breed puppies are at risk for developmental bone and joint problems—which can be painful during puppyhood and may carry adverse effects into adulthood.

Diets for large and giant breed puppies help prevent these risks by encouraging steady growth, not fast growth, with a lower fat and calorie content. Your puppy's adult size is determined by their genetics—so there's no need to rush their growth. Accelerated growth is a big risk factor for developmental bone and joint problems.

Avoid an excess of certain nutrients, vitamins, and minerals. For example, while we often think of calcium as healthy for bones, too much calcium can have the opposite effect—leading to various bone health problems, and even bone deformities in puppies.

Too much or too little of any dietary component—including protein, vitamin D, calcium, and more—can adversely affect your puppy's health. For this reason, never give your puppy a supplement, vitamin, or other nutritional product without first checking with your veterinarian.

*Large breed puppy diets are complete and balanced for healthy growth and development.*



Nutritional balance is also important for adult dogs. Even with ingredients like protein, too much can throw your dog's diet out of balance. So, choose a complete and balanced diet formulation, and focus on quality of ingredients rather than quantity.

*An appropriate diet—designed for large breeds—gives your dog exactly what they need.*

By feeding a large breed formulated diet to your big dog, you're taking an important step in promoting their overall health—and contributing to their wellbeing each time you fill their food bowl.

From our family to yours,  
**Fromm Family Pet Food**