

Coconut Oil for Dogs

Health Benefits of Coconut Oil

Supplement oils can be a confusing topic. Most dog owners have heard of the benefits of feeding fish oils. There are many oils that can be used to you and your dog's benefit, each with different pros and cons. Here we will cover coconut oils for your dog.

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Coconut Oil: One Simple Supplement to Consider for Your Dog's Diet and Medical Kit Coconut oil is a supplement which has been used for years for human consumption. It is believed to provide benefits in treating diabetes, thyroid conditions, irritable bowel syndrome and other digestive issues. It is also believed to improve thyroid efficiency, which can boost energy levels and increase endurance as well. Topical application has proven it to be a superior skin moisturizer. What are the benefits of coconut oil for dogs?

Only in recent years has coconut oil been considered as a supplement for dogs. Coconut oil contains lauric acid which is a fatty acid. Some of the many benefits attributed to ingesting coconut oil on a daily basis include a reduction of the risk of certain cancers, a promotion of normal thyroid function, relief of arthritic issues, improved digestion and promotion of healthy skin and coat.

Additional benefits can be gained from using coconut oil topically, including relief for symptoms of rashes on the skin. It is believed to act as a disinfectant for cuts. It also promotes speedy healing of wounds. It is a great substance to rub into the pads of your dog's feet if your dog tends to get sore pads from walking and running on rocky ground or pavement. Since coconut oil also acts as a deodorizer, it should also control some of that doggy odor many dogs experience.

Coconut oils consist of more than 90% saturated fats, with a few unsaturated fatty acids, such as monounsaturated fatty acids and polyunsaturated fatty acids. Most of the saturated fats in coconut oil are Medium Chain Triglycerides (MCTs).

What is the recommended dosage?

The proper amount of coconut oil to use on a daily basis is one teaspoon per ten pounds of dog, or one tablespoon per thirty pounds of dog.

As with any supplement, if your pet has any medical conditions which are being treated by your veterinarian, or if you know of a chronic health condition suffered by your pet, you should check with your veterinarian to make sure it does not contraindicate any current treatment plan.

Most coconut oil benefits come from the MCTs or Medium Chain Triglycerides. For example, the lauric acid in coconut oil has antibacterial, antiviral, and anti-fungal properties. Capric and caprylic acid have similar properties and are best known for their anti-fungal effects.

In addition, MCTs are efficiently metabolized to provide an immediate source of fuel and energy, enhancing athletic performance and aiding weight loss. In dogs, the MCTs in coconut oil balance the thyroid, helping overweight dogs lose weight and helping sedentary dogs feel energetic.

According to a well known certified nutritionist and naturopathic doctor, coconut oil gently elevates the metabolism, provides a higher level of energy and vitality, protects you from illness, and speeds healing. As a bonus, coconut oil improves any dog's skin and coat, improves digestion, and reduces allergic reactions.

Can I give my pet any medical supplement that I take?

There are many substances that are beneficial to humans but can prove to be toxic to your dog. Just because you can consume something does not mean your dog can eat the same thing. In the case of coconut oil, unless there is a pre-existing medical condition as outlined above, this supplement is being recommended by many vets as a daily supplement for dogs, especially those with digestive disorders or skin conditions.

Importance of MCT's

Integrative Veterinarian and Naturopathic Doctor, Dr. Karen Becker, says "Medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs) have been shown to improve brain energy metabolism and decrease the amyloid protein buildup that results in brain lesions in older dogs. Coconut oil is a rich source of MCTs for dogs. I recommend 1/4 teaspoon for every 10 pounds of body weight twice daily for basic MCT support."

How do I feed this supplement to my dog? Coconut oil has a good flavour, making it an easy supplement to pour over your dog's daily ration of food. Most dogs will not even notice the addition of the supplement. Can I expect any reactions to the addition of coconut oil to my dog's diet?

If you begin adding the oil slowly, your dog will hopefully not suffer any negative effects. Occasionally a dog which is sensitive to changes in diet may experience loose stools after the addition of coconut oil to the diet. If this occurs, discontinue the oil for a day or two, and then re-introduce, using a smaller dosage than you tried the first time. If your dog continues to experience problems, stop using the supplement and contact your veterinarian.

Another side effect which occasionally occurs includes flu-like symptoms. If this occurs in your dog, discontinue using the supplement immediately and contact your veterinarian for suggestions on how to introduce this product into your dog's diet over a longer period of time. It may take several days for your dog's digestive system to get used to the product.

Considering the benefits of coconut oil, this product helps support overall good health in dogs and should be seriously considered as a reasonable supplement to add to your dog's daily diet.