

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: ANCILLARY CANCER TREATMENTS

Recent advances in pet care, nutrition, and veterinary medicine have resulted in longer, healthier lives for our pets. Due to the increased numbers of senior pets, veterinarians are now seeing cancer more frequently than before. Fortunately, advances in veterinary medicine allow us to now successfully treat many types of cancer. While the treatment varies depending on the type, location, and severity of the cancer, most cancer is initially treated with surgery and/or combination of medications that are directed at killing the cancer cells (chemotherapy). In addition, there are a number of things owners can do to help improve their pet's quality of life with cancer.

GENERAL NUTRITION STRATEGY:

Cancer preferentially takes nutrients from the patient. It likes carbohydrates a lot (the simpler the better), protein ok, and is not fond of fats. Therefore, a diet void of simple sugars, restricted but adequate in protein and high in fats slows cancer growth. Commercially, this is "N/D", or "neoplasia diet" that can be purchased at the clinic. Changing to this diet, or any diet, may cause diarrhea, so the transition should be done slowly.

AMINO ACIDS:

Several amino acids are typically depleted in cancer patients. They can be purchased over the counter at health food stores and are likely beneficial.

1. Glutamine 500mg per day
2. Arginine 1000mg per day

GOOD FATS:

The N3 or omega three fatty acids cannot be used by cancer for energy and may prevent or deter the vascular spread of cancer. These are available as "fish oil" in health food stores or as "Efa-Z" from the clinic. Supplement at twice the bottle dosage.

MINERALS:

Zinc, Chromium and Iron are depleted in cancer patients. Supplement your pet with human Centrum Silver at one tablet per day.

DOXYCYCLINE:

There is reasonable evidence to support an anticancer effect of tetracycline-based antibiotics. They may slow the spread of cancer. Your pet should probably take this antibiotic daily for life.