



FEATURE

Is Flaxseed Good for Dogs?

Written by Rhea Nischal

Flaxseed, also known as flax seed or simply flax, is a natural superfood preferred by many humans. But what about dogs? Do our furry friends like eating flax seed and is flax seed healthy for them?

Flaxseed can be given to dogs as it contains vital minerals, protein, fat and fibre. It is a healthy superfood that possesses many essential fatty acids such as ALA, also known as Omega-3. Flaxseed also protects a dog from getting cancer and provides protection against diabetes. Flaxseed can be fed to a dog in the form of ground flaxseed, flaxseed oil or the whole seeds. Flaxseed is also present in many dog treats and food, and the dietary fibre helps constipation issues. It is obtained from the flax plant and benefits the health, coat and skin of a dog immensely. Read on to know more about the benefits of this superfood!

Can Dogs Eat Flaxseed?

Yes, dogs can most certainly eat flaxseed. Flaxseed can be introduced to the diet of a dog steadily so that the dog's stomach does not get upset. The seeds can be ground before you give them to your precious pooch. If you feed it whole seeds, they will simply travel the dog's digestive system without the essential nutrients getting absorbed. This provides no benefit for the dog as the seeds come out undigested, in the same form they were eaten. It is not recommended that pet owners give their dogs whole seeds.

Dogs that are given whole flaxseeds will not be benefited in any way. This wastes money, time and effort as feeding whole seeds will do no harm, but also no gain. Interestingly, flax seeds are quite stable and have been discovered unharmed in Egyptian tombs! The benefits of flaxseed can be reaped by the dog if it eats it in ground form. Dog owners can sprinkle ground flaxseed on the dog's food or feed it through a capsule.



However, it is imperative to know that flaxseeds go rancid a short while after being ground. Thus, flaxseed must be ground close to the feeding time. There are many dog food manufacturers that have included flaxseed in dog food as an ingredient, but it isn't yet common. The majority of dog foods lack natural nutrients found in flax seeds. It is essential to feed your dog a flaxseed supplement of good quality. It is also believed that the system of dogs finds it tough to convert ALA to EPA and DHA. Thus, for easier conversion of ALA into DHA and EPA, it is important to give your dog high-quality flax. As a responsible dog owner, you must locate a high-quality source from a well-reviewed seller. Feeding your dog fresh-ground flax supplements that are of good quality nourishes your dog. The dog benefits from the nutrients and high-fibre content in flax.

The dosage of ground flaxseed that is safe to be fed to a dog varies with each dog's weight. It is imperative to give the appropriate dosage that is safe for your dog. The amount can be adjusted gradually, but the schedule must be strictly followed. [It is vital to consult with your dog's vet regarding the addition of flaxseed in your dog's diet, especially if the dog is hypoglycemic or diabetic. Only the vet can provide you with the right recommendation if your dog is hypoglycemic or diabetic.](#)

Health Benefits of Flaxseed?

Flaxseeds are brown and golden in colour and are produced by the flax plant. They have a nutty taste and possess numerous health benefits for a dog. They have antioxidants and essential fatty acids in them that provide many benefits. Flaxseeds contain Omega-6 and Omega-3 fatty acids that aid in keeping the dog's coat and skin shiny and healthy. The alpha-linolenic acid (also commonly known as ALA or Omega-3) in flaxseed is renowned for its anti-inflammatory qualities that strengthen the immune system of a dog. Flaxseed contains protein, dietary fibre, lignans, and manganese.

Flaxseed Dosage for Dogs



When using oil (work up slowly to the daily amount)

Large dogs	Medium	Small	Toy breed
 1-1 1/2 teaspoons daily	 3/4 teaspoons daily	 1/2 teaspoons daily	 1/4 teaspoons daily

When using ground flax (work up slowly to the daily amount)

 1/4 cup daily	 2-1/2 tablespoons daily	 1-1/2 tablespoons daily	 1 tablespoon daily	 2-1/2 teaspoons daily	 1-1/2 teaspoons daily	 1/2 - 1 teaspoons daily
---	---	---	--	---	---	---

Concerns



- using too much flaxseed can cause your dog to have soft stool or diarrhea.
- The consumption of large amounts of flax can lead to cyanide poisoning.

www.youolddog.com

TIPS: The safe forms of flaxseed to give your dog are processed ground flaxseed and flaxseed oil.

Refrigerate the ground flaxseed to avoid spoiling.

ALA or Omega-3 has proven to be quite beneficial to a dog's health. Omega-3 helps in the proper functioning of cells, contributes to cell membrane structure, maintains the health of a dog's skin and coat, and strengthens the immune system. The Omega-3 fatty acids can also benefit dogs suffering from inflammatory, allergic, or autoimmune problems.

Flaxseeds have many benefits as mentioned earlier. They help in maintaining the healthy coat and skin of a dog. If you supplement your dog with flaxseed frequently or regularly, you could improve your dog's skin and fur health.

The anti-inflammatory qualities of the fatty acids present in flaxseed, such as alpha-linolenic acid, help in eradicating skin irritation. They also aid mobility by improving your dog's joint movement. Omega-3 helps in reducing inflammation of kidneys in dogs suffering from kidney disease by producing anti-inflammatory agents in the system of the dog. Flaxseed also leads to healthy digestion in a dog and has proven to lower its blood pressure.

Flaxseeds also support the immune system of a dog. A healthy immune system keeps the dog's body from catching any problems. Flaxseed contains lignans which are antioxidants that aid a dog's immune system in fighting off infections and diseases. They also help a dog in decreasing inflammation in any body part.

When there are many hormones being secreted in the dog's body, they are facing an adrenal problem. Flaxseed can also help dogs suffering from adrenal issues as they have high fibre content and a high amount of lignans. The lignans can be found in the hulls of the seed especially. Including a healthy and safe amount of flaxseed in your dog's diet can provide many benefits and can also control adrenal problem symptoms.

SDG lignan can be found in flax seed hulls. They contain high fibre levels that are known to benefit dogs that have a deficiency of fibre in their body. This also helps in soaking the bodily toxins and improving the volume and frequency of bowel movements. You should supplement your dog with flaxseed based on the recommendation of your dog's vet only.

DOGS NSW Editorial Policy

The editor reserves the right to withhold publication of any material whatsoever. Views and opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the correspondents and contributors and not necessarily those of the editor, DOGS NSW, the printers or other contributors. DOGS NSW will not accept anything that is poorly written, offensive or defamatory in tone or nature and will reject subject matter that is deemed as not being in the best interest of the organisation, its policies and Code of Ethics. All material is accepted in good faith and the accuracy of the contents of any material submitted is the responsibility of the contributor. Names and addresses of contributors may be withheld from publication on request but must be supplied. While every effort is made to ensure that all material is reproduced correctly, DOGS NSW accept no responsibility for any error.

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

The *Competition and Consumer Act* came into force

on 19 April 2011. Certain provisions of the Act relating to consumer protection place a heavy burden upon advertisers, advertising agents and the publishers of advertisements. In view of the obvious impossibility of our ensuring that advertisements submitted for publication comply with the Act, advertisers themselves need to ensure that the provisions of the Act are strictly complied with. Advertisers are warned that it is their responsibility to be able to substantiate any statements or claims made in advertisements. In cases of doubt, advertisers are asked to seek legal advice before submitting advertising material.

DISPUTES

From time to time, members refer to DOGS NSW matters in which it is not appropriate for our organisation to become involved. For example, disputes between members in relation to the sale of dogs. These are usually private matters to be determined by the contractual agreements between parties. Disputes on such matters should be resolved by the courts and not by DOGS NSW.

Members are requested to refrain from referring such matters to DOGS NSW. They are issues of a private or domestic nature and should properly be resolved by the courts or the Department of Fair Trading.

DISCLAIMER

The breeders who appear throughout this magazine are merely breeders that DOGS NSW understands may have litters for sale. In providing you with their details, DOGS NSW makes no representations as to the reputation of any breeder or as to the soundness or suitability of any puppy you may decide to acquire from any breeder. You must satisfy yourself that any puppy you may decide to acquire is healthy, sound and meets your requirements. DOGS NSW accepts no responsibility in respect of the information contained in the magazine or in respect of any puppy that you may decide to acquire from any breeder in it.

All breeders who are current members of DOGS NSW have agreed to abide by the DOGS NSW Regulations, including the Code of Ethics.