

# SENSITIVE DOG

## Reactions against food and prevention strategies.

### The importance of an holistic feeding for the management of food intolerance.

The progress achieved by veterinary medicine and particularly by pet foods over the last decades, has contributed to the longer life expectation of dogs and cats, granting them a good quality of life.

Good hygiene, a complete and balanced diet complying to their specific needs, and a constant check-up of the state of health all contribute to living longer and better. The word “holistic” derives from the Greek term “holos”, which means “Everything together – globally”, and coupled with nutrition, it describes everything concerning the complex “Food world”.

Holistic Feeding is based on food science, but also on nutritional disciplines which have been strongly developed over the last years, revolutionizing many basic concepts of the relations between food and the animal body, and between food and psychophysical well-being.

Often, our friends are considered “family pets”, very components of the family unit, with a consequent harmful humanization.

In fact, this aspect impacts on feeding and it stimulates “reactions” against various foods.

They come out of the incapability of the body to digest a particular food, because of metabolic defects that could be determined by the way of life (scarce chewing, mistaken food combinations, etc.), by altered emotional states (dogs which are kept in cages or near female dogs in heat, weakening diseases, etc.), or by the consumption of pharmaceuticals over long periods. They originate at intestinal level, presupposing an irritation of the mucous membrane, but they do not provoke the production of antibodies and rarely cause the production of Histamine.



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Food Intolerances manifest themselves almost always with a general symptomatology (tiredness, abdominal postprandial swelling, recurrent infections, articular pains, etc.) or with skin changes (dry coat, eczemas, hives, atopic dermatitis, etc.); they are often related to Body Weight disorder, for both excess or shortcomings. They could be traced back to the build-up of substances which generate Hypersensitivity, until the overcoming of "limit dose". In this latter case, the body activates a series of compensatory mechanisms and it is able to "Tolerate" that particular substance until the overcoming of a determined limit and the disturbances manifest.

Moreover, these reactions are not always immediate, but they occur from 1 to 36 hours after the ingestion of that food. Because of this latency period, it is often difficult to accept and understand the "sudden" intolerance of our dog or cat against a common, daily eaten food.

There could be plenty disturbances caused by allergies and intolerances, but while the allergy symptoms are rapidly manifested after the ingestion, and it is easy to associate them to a determined food, the disturbances due to intolerances appear after a certain time, following the consumption of that food.

In order to reach an improvement of the symptomatologic situation, it is necessary to rigorously abstain for 2-3 months from the consumption of the accused food: partial or short time eliminations cannot produce satisfactory results.

The dietary regime of the pet, over the different phases of its life, should be proposed to a veterinarian, conscious of various needs, during both good or bad health.

It is possible to recover from Food Intolerances, following elimination diets, possibly associated to phytotherapeutic support. In this point of view, it would be good to use non-familiar and easily digestible proteic sources.

