

# Collaborative research team identifies safe upper level for vitamin A consumption for puppies

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A collaborative team of researchers, working on behalf of the European Pet Food Industry Federation (FEDIAF), has identified a safe upper level for vitamin A consumption for puppies. The research marks a significant step forward in the development of science-based recommendations for vitamin A levels for puppies and sheds new light on their distinct nutritional needs.

This research was conducted by scientists from the Free University of Berlin (Germany), the University of Potsdam (Germany), and the WALTHAM Centre for Pet Nutrition (UK).

[Vitamin](#) A is an essential nutrient for dogs and is particularly important for vision, growth and the immune system. It is found naturally in liver, a key ingredient in many pet food products. However, there is currently no consensus regarding how much vitamin A puppies can consume and nutritional guidelines vary significantly on this topic.

In order to assess how puppies respond to varying levels of vitamin A, the researchers in this study examined 49 dogs aged between 8 and 16 weeks over a period of 8 weeks. The puppies were randomly assigned to one of four groups, and each group was fed a different amount of vitamin A. The levels of vitamin A fed to the puppies in each group were based on existing guidelines set by the three main industry bodies: 12,500 IU; 75,000 IU and 100,000 IU/1000 kcal metabolisable energy

(ME), with a [control group](#) fed vitamin A levels at 5,000 IU/1000 kcal ME.

The results showed that there were no differences in [health outcomes](#) across the four test groups. This finding highlights that puppies are able to metabolise higher levels of vitamin A than previously thought. The research therefore provides valuable new insights into puppies' nutritional needs and demonstrates clearly that levels of vitamin A in line with FEDIAF guidelines are safe for puppies.

Commenting on the findings, Thomas Meyer, Secretary General of FEDIAF, noted: "These findings validate the long-standing recommended [levels](#) of vitamin A in the FEDIAF Nutritional Guidelines for Cats and Dogs. They confirm that the European pet food industry's choice of ingredients that are naturally rich in vitamin A, such as liver, is based on sound science for ensuring the healthy growth and development of puppies."

"This collaborative study underlines the European pet food industry's responsible, self-regulatory approach to safe and nutritious [pet food](#) products and highlights the importance of the FEDIAF guidelines as a reference for cat and dog nutrition that should be considered alongside other publications, such as those of the National Research Council (NRC)," Thomas Meyer added.

Study author Dr. Penny Morris from the WALTHAM Centre for Pet Nutrition commented on the involvement of WALTHAM in the research: "For over 50 years, WALTHAM has been driving scientific advances to advance and share knowledge in pet health and nutrition. In collaboration with FEDIAF and leading experts from the University of Potsdam and the University of Berlin, we are part of a team working to establish science-based recommendations for vitamin A consumption for [puppies](#) that will have a meaningful impact on the lives of dogs

worldwide."

The research has been published in the *British Journal of Nutrition* and is available online here: [journals.cambridge.org/bjn/waltham](https://journals.cambridge.org/bjn/waltham)

Provided by University of Cambridge

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