



# COULD GRAIN-FREE DIETS DAMAGE MY DOG'S HEART?

**The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is following reports of dogs with a heart condition that may be tied to certain pet foods containing peas, lentils, other legume seeds or potatoes as main ingredients.**

## **CERTAIN DIETS MAY BE TIED TO CASES OF HEART PROBLEMS IN DOGS**

In July 2018, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) alerted pet owners and veterinarians of reports that some dogs eating certain pet food with peas, lentils, other legume seeds or potatoes were diagnosed with dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM). Those ingredients seem to be common in some "grain-free" diets, but diets containing grains were also represented in the reports. A small number of cases reported involved dogs who ate a home-cooked diet.

## **WHAT'S CANINE DILATED CARDIOMYOPATHY (DCM)?**

In DCM, a dog's heart muscle thins and the heart chambers enlarge, so the heart has a harder time pumping and heart valves may leak. These changes can lead to fluid buildup in the dog's lungs and abdomen. If your dog ever shows signs of DCM or other heart conditions, including decreased energy, cough, difficulty breathing or episodes of collapse, contact your veterinarian.

## **WHAT'S BEING DONE?**

The FDA is working with laboratories, veterinarians, animal nutritionists and other scientists as well as pet food manufacturers to better understand the cases and potential ties to diet.

## **WHAT SHOULD I DO?**

If you want to know whether your pet's food is one of the diets being discussed, review the ingredient list to see whether legumes and/or potatoes are listed as main ingredients (which typically show up before the first vitamin or mineral ingredient). The FDA was not advising dietary changes as of February 2019, but you can discuss that with your veterinarian, taking into account your dog's specific needs and medical history. The FDA has also asked pet owners and veterinary professionals to report cases of DCM in dogs that are suspected of having a link to the dog's diet.

## **WHERE DO I FIND THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION?**

- Ask your veterinarian.
- Read all the official information from the FDA at [fda.gov](http://fda.gov).

