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BENEFITS

- Easily absorbed minerals
- Good source of collagen
- Good source of gelatin
- Nutritious base for a home-cooked diet.



DEXTER SUGGESTS

If your dog is very ill and refusing food, bone broth can be fed by syringe to ensure hydration.

You can mix bone broth with powdered slippery elm bark for a sustaining convalescence food (see our Reference Sheet #21 on Slippery Elm for more information).

BONE BROTH

Bone broth is one of the easiest foods you can make at home to add to your pet's diet (and your own). It's high in minerals, collagen, and other micronutrients, all easily absorbed by the body.

There is no single recipe for bone broth. The two things all recipes have in common:

- **The addition of an acidic liquid.** This helps draw the minerals out of the bones more thoroughly. Apple Cider Vinegar is most commonly used (it's well regarded by herbalists for its ability to draw minerals out of plants), but lemon juice may be substituted.
- **Long Cooking Time.** This is necessary to get the full nutrition out of the bones. There is no "magic" time, but we recommend simmering for 24 hours in a crockpot. A well-monitored pot on the stove works too (turn it off if you leave the house, and when you go to sleep). Even if you don't cook it quite so long you'll still make a tasty nourishing broth.

Start with cooked and/or raw bones. Include joint bones with cartilage. You can collect and save bones from your own meals in the freezer but be sure to rinse any sauce off that may be irritating to your dog's digestive system. Alternatively, you can use a whole chicken including the meat and skin, if you prefer.

Completely cover the bones with water. Add a little raw apple cider vinegar; 2-3 tablespoons for a whole leftover chicken, for example. Cover and simmer over low heat as described above.

When finished strain the bones (do *not* feed these to your dog!). Once it's chilled skim the excess fat off the top. The remainder is your broth. If it has a jelly-like consistency when it is cold you've done a good job! You can freeze this broth in small containers (even ice cube trays) for easy dispensing. You can store it in your refrigerator for about 4 days, it should be frozen for longer storage.

You can add extras to your broth while it cooks (it's usually best to strain these too)

- Kelp or other deeply nourishing foods.
- Herbs recommended by your vet or herbalist
- Immune-boosting Shitaki mushrooms

Add this broth to your pet's regular food (start slow, just a spoonful at first, or use a base for a home-cooked diet. And by all means have some yourself, it makes a nourishing base for any recipe!