

Each case must be treated as an individual. Besides choosing the right diet, I recommend you ask the vets who have examined your dog whether it is appropriate for your dog to be on long term treatment for the gulpies.

Here are some hypoallergenic diets I recommend, although this list is a bit dated, as is the 'gulpies' article you read (2019). You should consult your vet who has examined your dog and knows the situation best, or if you want a more personalized consultation from me, see below for the 'form letter'.

Common Hypoallergenic Diets:

Note: There are no validated tests that help tell you what your dog might be allergic to, as far as food allergies (there is no blood or salivary test worth doing). You would have to do an elimination trial and then careful challenge, to know what you might get away with, or you might just want to keep using a hypoallergenic diet longterm, especially in a Wheaten terrier.

Strictest diet yet (best of best for extremely sensitive dogs): Royal Canin's ULTAMINO Anallergenic diet (feather diet)

First tier (best, used more commonly than Ultamino): hydrolysates like Purina HA-CNM, Hill's Z/D Ultra, or Royal Canin's HP. These diets have been chemically hydrolyzed down to small molecular weight fragments of proteins, which the immune system will not recognize as foreign. Even though the label might say 'chicken', it's not really chicken protein anymore. Non-hydrolyzed chicken protein is not hypoallergenic but hydrolyzed chicken in a hydrolysate diet is usually OK.

Second tier (next best): Hill's Z/D; Hill's D/D whitefish, duck, venison, or salmon (not lamb or egg); Royal Canin/IVD rabbit, duck, venison, or fish; Eukanuba Response FP; Purina LA; Royal Canin/Waltham Limited Antigen Diets (Selected Protein) or their dermatology diets as long as there is no lamb, chicken, dairy or egg in them.

Snacks: Purina's Gentle Snackers, Royal Canin Hypoallergenic Treats or use kibbles of other hypoallergenic diets, sweet potatoes.

Don't use chewable heartworm medications or beef or chicken flavored pill-pockets. Heartgard is not hypoallergenic (I don't know about Sentinel). Remember, if you're allergic to peanuts, it only takes one peanut to make you really sick (or cause allergic inflammation). The new chewable hydrolysate tick prevention products are probably ok.

For dogs needing a renal diet as well as a hypoallergenic one, I choose Royal Canin Multifunction Formula for Renal Support and Hydrolyzed Protein (RC Renal-HP) or the Hill's D/D diets of the second tier, which have almost as low protein content as the renal diet (non-hypoallergenic) Hill's K/D. If your dog doesn't like those, use other hypoallergenic diets that she/he likes, to which I would add a little rice or potatoes to cut the protein intake down a bit to be more like a renal diet as far as protein intake is concerned. Usually dogs with food allergies can handle rice or potatoes as the carbohydrate source.

Caution: commercial renal diets are often higher in fat than regular diets. For dogs that have had pancreatitis, they may need a low fat diet (as well as possibly a renal/hypoallergenic diet). For these dogs I would consult a veterinary nutritionist's consultation, to make up a special recipe to cook, with balanced nutrients, minerals, and vitamins. Go to www.petdiets.com or www.balanceit.com or a veterinary school's nutritionist service and be sure they know your dog's special needs.

Another Caution: commercial grain-free diets might be touted as hypoallergenic, but some of these have been associated with dilated cardiomyopathy. As of June 29, 2019, the FDA cited 16 diets associated with hundreds of cases of DCM (in descending order of events): Acana, Zignature, Taste of the Wild, 4Health, Earthborn Holistic, Blue Buffalo, Nature's Domain, Fromm, Merrick, California Natural, Natural Balance, Orijen, Nature's Variety, NutriSource, Nutro, and Rachael Ray Nutrish.

In general, I don't trust the smaller companies to have truly hypoallergenic food preparation, since they don't have their own factories and have to rent facilities to make their diets, and those can't be counted on to be thoroughly cleaned between users. Thus many of those diets have been tested and shown to have allergenic contaminants in them. So as far as makers, I like to stick with Royal Canin, Hill's, or Purina because they have their own facilities and have shown excellent quality control over what's in their product.

For more information, or if you want a personalized consultation from me, here is my 'form letter':

After 41 years of vetting and a wonderful career at Penn Vet, I am now retired. I am doing consultations in my retirement for a fee (usually \$300 for sick dogs that tend to be complicated cases), paid via PayPal billed to your email address. I would need to see all the test results (by email), then I would send you and your veterinarian an email including any questions I had about history, physical examination findings, etc., and send you both my recommendations for any further testing I thought indicated, diet, medications, monitoring, etc. It is important for me to have contact with your vets since they have examined your dog and I haven't. We would all work together. Let me know if you want me to get involved.

Of course getting a consult in person from an internist near you would be better, so I certainly won't be offended if you take that route. You can go to www.acvim.org and find a DACVIM, SAIM (small animal internal medicine) specialist near you. Best wishes and take care. -Meryl

That's all for now. Stay well! Stay safe! Best wishes, Meryl

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