

WANT TO KNOW WHY THE LOW-COST, NUTRIENT-PACKED "SARDINE" IS A MUST ADD TO YOUR PET'S DIET PLAN? THEN CHECK OUT THE "TOP 10" REASONS WHY!

If you're like me, you're always searching for an herb or whole food add that will help extend the life of your furry BFF.

But if I told you one of these treasures was a small, salt-water, soft-boned, oil-rich, silvery fish that smells worse than most grandparents' feet, would you still try it out?

Hailed as one of the richest sources of omega-3, vitamin D and vitamin B-12 (to name a few), this whole food addition (which got its name from the Italian island of Sardinia) is called the sardine!

I can hear the groaning now... "Sardines look and smell gross!" most of you are probably saying.

True, but if you check out my top 10 reasons why you should ignore the smell and fall in love, you won't regret it AND your pet will love you for it!

Check out these 10 awesome reasons as to why this is a must-add:

1.) PROTEIN PACKED

Your carnivorous dog and cat need protein for proper muscle and connective tissue development. Protein provides structure for skin, hair, joints, bones and nails to name a few! Sardines and fish, which are considered a high quality protein, are full of the essential amino acids your pets cannot produce and need from this type food.

2.) JOINT AND BONE SUPPORT

Sardines are not only one of the most concentrated sources of the omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA for joint health, but they are packed with a rich source of bone-building and bone strengthening vitamin D!

3.) HEART HEALTH

Sardines are an excellent source of vitamin B12, which promotes an overall cardiovascular well-being. Now tie in the DHA and EPA that are also found in the sardine and you have a cocktail of awesomeness aiding in heart health!

4.) BEATS UP ON CANCER

Studies have shown that omega-3s found in the sardine can inhibit the formation of tumours and prevent cancer from metastasizing. They do this by inducing a process in cancer cells called apoptosis. Today, science is also showing that an ample source of vitamin D, from the sardine, may turn out to play an important role in the prevention of certain types of cancer as well.

5.) BRAIN HEALTH

Studies in people show that supplementing with DHA (found in sardines), is beneficial in supporting cognitive health in aging brains. A study on beagle puppies found DHA improved cognitive learning and motor skills during the developmental stages. Therefore, sardines help sharpen your pet's learning abilities, memory, eye function and psychomotor skills.

6.) HELPS RELIEVE ALLERGIES

Research suggests that supplementing with fatty acids found in sardines, is useful in preventing atopy (allergies to inhaled substances such as pollens and molds) from developing in young animals. Also, because of the incredible anti-inflammatory properties that the sardines carry, they are a great add to help reduce the chronic redness and inflamed skin some pets experience from these allergies.

7.) CAN HELP YOUR PET LOSE WEIGHT

The rich source of omega-3s found in the sardine can activate a type of protein that turns on fat-burning genes in your pet's body! Used correctly, they can help slim down pudgy pets.

8.) POSITIVE EFFECTS AGAINST SEIZING PETS

Research shows that the omega, packed in the sardine, contains potent anti-inflammatory properties that fight the inflammation mediators in epileptic patients while increasing seizure thresholds, in other words, helping to suppress attacks.

9.) KIDNEY SUPPORT

A study on dogs found that while omega 6 supplementation accelerated the decline in kidney function of early stages of kidney disease, supplementing with omega-3 had protective effects. In human studies, it was found that people with long-term use of fish oil, like the oil found in sardines, slowed the loss of kidney function!

10.) MOOD IMPROVER AND ANTI-DEPRESSANT

EPA and DHA found in sardines, according to research, can also improve mood. EPA from marine sources like sardines can decrease cytokines associated with depression.

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE AMOUNT OF TOXINS FOUND IN TODAY'S FISH SUPPLY? AREN'T SARDINES POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS?

You see, sardines are a short lived fish. Therefore they don't have a lot of time to accumulate a ton of toxins from the water. They are at the bottom of the aquatic food chain as well, meaning they only feast on plankton. So they don't concentrate heavy metals, such as mercury, and contaminants as do other fish.

OK, NOW FOR THE MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION: HOW MUCH SARDINE SHOULD YOU FEED TO YOUR PET?

Let's go to expert and pet food formulator, Steve Brown, for this one shall we?

"The best canned sardines for dogs (and cats) are those in water with no salt added. Avoid sardines packed in soy, corn, sunflower, safflower, or other omega-6 rich oils.

Use the entire can of sardines within two days after opening it, and refrigerate the open can, so that the fragile fats do not go rancid.

Don't overdo it! EPA and DHA, like most nutrients, provide wonderful health benefits in small amounts, and are detrimental in excess amounts or without sufficient antioxidant protection.

Here are my sardine recommendations for adult dogs.

Feed twice this much to puppies and pregnant or lactating females.

Dog's Weight 3.75-oz can sardines

5 lbs 1/4 can per week

15 lbs 1/2 can per week

25 lbs 5/8 can per week

50 lbs 1 can per week

100 lbs 1 3/4 cans per week

A 3.75-ounce can of sardines has about 200 calories, so reduce the amount of dry food given on "sardine days" accordingly. Rule of thumb: One can of sardines in water has about the same number of calories as 1/2 cup of most dog foods.

For cats, no more than a 1/4 to maximum 1/2 a week.

Remember to always check with your veterinarian for specific doses, and always practice variation, moderation and balance when introducing new foods to your pets.

So go grab a clothes pin, plug your nose, and add some aquatic love to your pet's bowls. Most will love you for it!