

# GI EXCHANGE: Hydrolyzed Diets Go Beyond Food Allergies

**Why are hydrolyzed protein diets recommended for dogs and cats with food allergies?** By breaking proteins into smaller pieces, hydrolysis reduces a protein's ability to cross-link with immunoglobulins, which is a critical step to triggering an allergic reaction. Because hydrolyzed proteins are less allergenic, their use is not dependent on lack of prior exposure and a detailed diet history is less critical. This differs from a novel protein diet, which relies on a lack of prior exposure and requires a thorough dietary history to ensure the ingredients are "novel."

**Purina Veterinary Diets® HA Hypoallergenic® Canine and Feline Formulas are well-known hydrolyzed protein diets.**

**What do veterinarians need to know about them?** The major allergens in these diets have been hydrolyzed and the diets proven to be hypoallergenic. University research as well as clinical experience have confirmed that even dogs allergic to corn or soy have a reduced reaction to HA, making HA an excellent choice as an elimination diet. In addition, HA is highly digestible, nutritionally complete, palatable and appropriate for long-term feeding of dogs and cats of any age.

**Can HA help nutritionally manage pets with other conditions?** HA is an excellent choice for any dog or cat requiring a highly digestible diet, such as those with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), exocrine pancreatic insufficiency, and a number of liver conditions, including portosystemic shunts and hepatic encephalopathy.

Published and ongoing studies have confirmed that HA is beneficial for food-allergic dogs and most dogs with IBD. HA also has been tested for use in Dalmatians to reduce uric acid excretion, performing equally as well as a low-protein diet formulated specifically for that purpose, but without severe protein restriction.

Hydrolyzed diets are highly effective in the nutritional management of gastrointestinal and allergic conditions. Understanding how these diets work can help practitioners make the best use of them in their practices.



— Dottie P. Laflamme, DVM, PhD, DACVN  
Senior Research Scientist, Nestlé Purina PetCare