

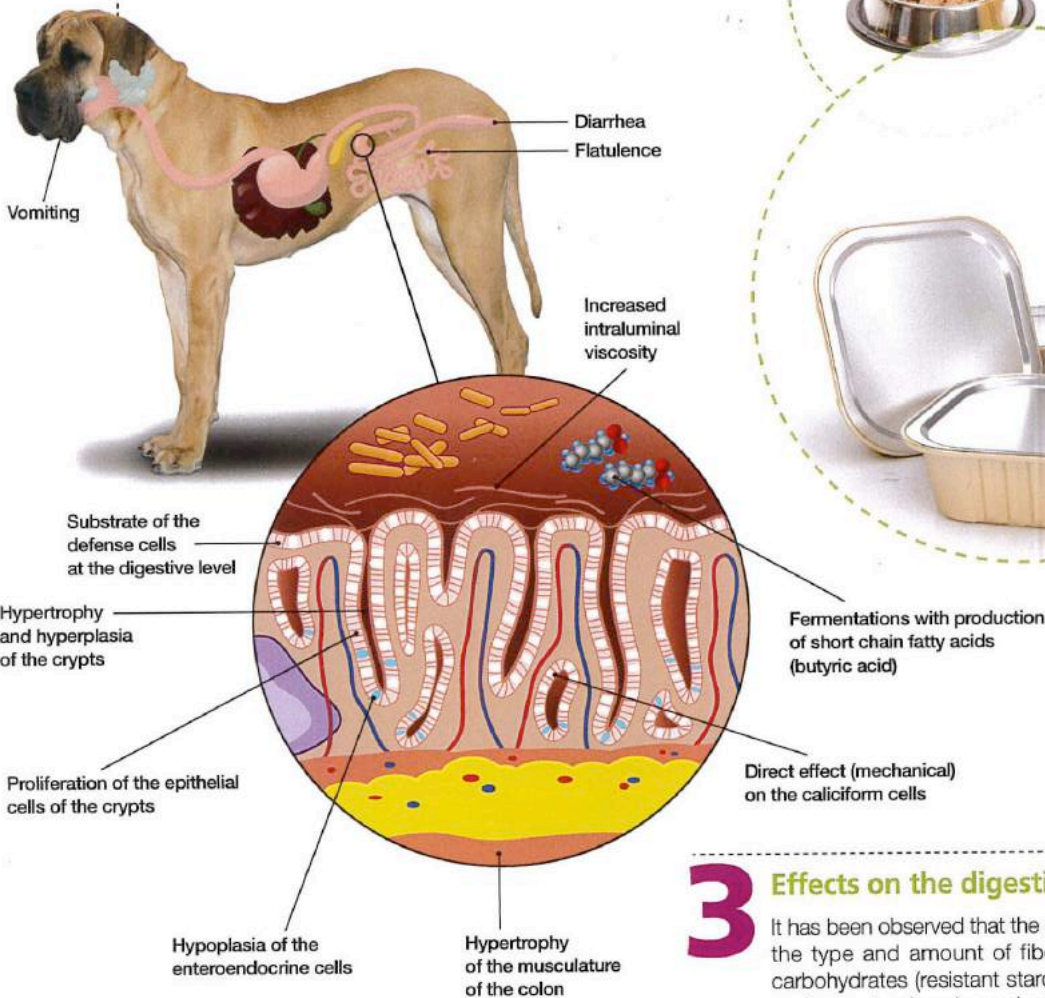
# Diet changes

## 1 Reasons to make changes

Throughout the life of pets, their feeding may need to be changed as a consequence of an imbalance in their initial food ration, because their requirements have changed (different physiological stages or presence of pathological processes) or because of a personal decision on behalf of the owner independent of our recommendations.

## 2 Substitution may lead to dysbiosis

In most healthy animals, these changes can be implemented from one day to the next without causing any digestive problems. However, sometimes digestive symptoms with a sudden presentation may be produced. Initially taking into consideration only healthy animals, the cause of this process is a dysbiosis due to the substitution, incorporation or modification in the proportions of the ingredients and nutrients.



## 3 Effects on the digestive microflora

It has been observed that the quality of the protein, the type and amount of fiber and the class of carbohydrates (resistant starch, oligosaccharides and non-starch polysaccharides) present in the food rations are related with the modifications in the digestive microflora (see image).

# How should I do it?

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## The veterinarian is partially responsible

Owners change their minds frequently regarding their pet's diet, and they report a lack of information received by their veterinarian about which is the best option for feeding their pet and the cost: we veterinarians have a certain amount of co-responsibility in this decision.



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## Any change must be gradual

It is recommended to change the type of food for at least 3 days, removing gradually larger amounts of the normal diet and simultaneously increasing the new diet in the same amount, giving the intestinal flora a chance to adapt adequately. If the composition of the new diet causes us to doubt its possible digestive impact or because it is a food that is poorly accepted by our patient, this period should be prolonged up to 7 or 10 days.



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## Cats require more time to adapt

We must keep in mind that the ingestive behavior of cats is more complicated than that of dogs. For this reason, in this species, and when faced with the possibility of an absolute rejection of the new diet, it is recommended that the food transition process be prolonged.

We can see how this should be done in the following table:



Dogs and cats (days)	Short transition		Long transition		Percentage of food	
	Dogs (days)	Cats (weeks)	Routine	New	Routine	New
1.2	1-3	1	75	25	75	25
3.4	4-6	2	50	50	50	50
5.6	7-9	3	25	75	25	75
7	10	4	0	100	0	100

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## Continued rejection on behalf of the animal

The animal may continue to reject the food ration in any of the previously mentioned situations. In these cases, we will have to diagnosis the cause, correct it or find alternatives that increase the animal's appetite.



## To be taken into account

In daily clinical practice, it is very simple, and comfortable for the owner, to use a mixture of 50 % of the two foods for 5 days and from the 6th day on, administer 100 % of the new food.

