Water Consumption and Hydration

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water consumption

how much is enough?

Water, the most important of all the nutrients your pet consumes, is essential for almost every bodily function. While an animal can lose all of its fat and half of its protein and survive, only a 10% loss of body water causes serious illness.

Dogs generally drink about 3/4 to 1 cup of water for every 10 pounds of body weight each day. Your dog should drink approximately the same amount of water daily. However, several factors can affect water intake. Hot weather, exercise, nursing, and certain medications may cause a dog to drink more water. Conversely, dogs who are ill, aged, or fed a moisture-rich canned food diet may drink less water.

You can easily monitor the amount of water your dog drinks. Pour a sufficient amount in the morning (i.e. 4 cups for a 40-pound dog), then measure how much is left at bedtime. If your dog drinks all the water, serve more the next day and see what remains. Track your dog's water consumption for 3-4 days to determine the average amount.

If you discover that your dog is not drinking enough water, encourage drinking by adding ice cubes or low-sodium chicken or beef broth to his water supply. You can also try a pet fountain, to make water more appealing.

If you observe an unusual change in your dog's drinking (or urination) habits, visit your veterinarian to rule out underlying medical problems such as urinary tract infection, diabetes mellitus, kidney disease, or Cushing's disease.

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