

Chew On This: New Survey Shows Many Puppy Owners Don't Know How Long to Feed Puppy Food, And The Reason Why Might Surprise You

Purina to celebrate National Dog Day on August 26 with "Pup-Up" video livestream featuring adoptable puppies from North Shore Animal League America and tips around puppy nutrition and behavior

ST. LOUIS, Aug. 24, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- A Purina survey, released today, found that while most puppy owners know dogs under a year old are considered puppies, the majority don't realize *breed size* determines *how long* their dog is considered a puppy and ultimately how long they need to eat puppy food.

"Puppies have specific nutritional requirements to help support their rapid growth and development. Similar to babies, puppies' bodies are fast-growing, but unlike babies, puppies pack all their growth into one to two short years," said Dr. Callie Harris, DVM, veterinarian at Purina. "It's important to feed a high-quality puppy food formula for at least the first 12 months and up to 24 months for large breeds. If you have a mixed breed or aren't sure where your dog falls in terms of breed size, it's best to consult your veterinarian. They can let you know when it's time to switch and help make it a successful transition."

As a general rule, dogs less than one year of age are considered puppies, but different breeds mature at different rates. Here's how long you can expect to feed your dog puppy food based on his breed size:

- Toy and small breed dogs weighing less than 30 pounds may reach full maturity between 9 and 12 months of age
- Dogs weighing between 30 and 80 pounds, or medium breeds, take 12 to 16 months to fully mature
- Large and giant breeds over 80 pounds can take up to 24 months to reach full maturity

The 2020 Puppy Owner Survey by Purina engaged 1,000 puppy owners in the United States and revealed the lengths people go to ensure their puppies get the nutrition necessary to become healthy adult dogs.

Among other key findings:

- Over half (54%) of puppy owners in the U.S. currently have a puppy between 6-12 months
- While 41% of puppy owners are aware that dogs up to a year old are considered puppies, very few realize breed size affects the length of time a dog is considered a puppy
- 47% of small breed owners didn't realize their dog needs to be fed puppy food for up to a year, and 92% of large breed owners didn't realize their dog needs to be fed puppy food for up to two years
- Nearly half (46%) of puppy owners consider their puppy's current size when finding the right food, despite the fact that breed – not current – size dictates the length of time a dog is considered to be a puppy
- For puppy owners who have stopped feeding puppy food, the main reason is a belief that their puppy has already reached adult size (36%)

The survey also found that, even when they're not eating, puppies keep their little mouths busy while they wait for the next meal:

- 77% of puppy owners agree their puppy is always chewing on something
- 74% of puppy owners agree their puppy will eat anything that gets too close to their mouths
- 75% of puppy owners agree their puppy is always on the lookout for scraps of food

"Puppies like to chew. It's what they do. Although it may seem that they're more inclined to eat our slippers

or furniture, it's our job to make sure we're helping them get the essential nutrients they need," said Dr. Annie Valuska, Ph.D., senior feeding behavior expert at Purina. "A few ways puppy owners can do this is by establishing a quiet feeding area away from distractions and temptations, like food prep areas and dining tables, and setting up a feeding routine or schedule by feeding him the same amount of food at the same times each day. Doing so will help keep his digestive system regular, make housetraining easier and keep him happy and healthy. And, while adult dogs should be fed twice a day, puppies require more frequent feedings, ideally three times a day."

To highlight the importance of puppy nutrition and in celebration of National Dog Day, Purina is hosting a "Pup-Up" video livestream on [Facebook.com/Purina](https://www.facebook.com/Purina) featuring adoptable puppies, in collaboration with [North Shore Animal League America](https://www.northshoreanimalleague.org) from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. EST on Wednesday, August 26. During the livestream, viewers will not only get to watch puppies at play, but also learn about puppy behavior and the importance of making sure puppies get the nutrition they need to make the healthy transition from puppy to adult dog from Purina's senior feeding behaviorist, Dr. Annie Valuska, Ph.D., and veterinarian, Dr. Callie Harris, DVM. Both experts will be available to chat with viewers and answer puppy owners' questions around puppy nutrition, their eating habits and tips on raising a healthy puppy.

"Today's livestream is the perfect opportunity to highlight the importance of rescue and adoption and illustrate the beautiful animals just waiting for adoption at local shelters and rescue organizations," said Joanne Yohannan, SVP, Operations, North Shore Animal League America. "We are grateful to Purina for their commitment to our mission and their support."

For more information about the adoptable livestream puppies from North Shore Animal League America, or to find the shelter closest to you go to [animalleague.org](https://www.animalleague.org).

For additional puppy nutrition information and tips, visit [Purina.com/puppy](https://www.purina.com/puppy).

About Nestlé Purina PetCare

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Purina promotes responsible pet care through our scientific research, our products and our support for pet-related organizations. Over the past five years, Purina has contributed more than \$150 million towards organizations that bring, and keep, people and pets together, as well as those that help our communities and environment thrive.

Purina is part of Nestlé, a global leader in Nutrition, Health and Wellness. For more information, visit [purina.com](https://www.purina.com) or [subscribe here](#) to get the latest Purina news.

About the Survey

The national survey of 1,000 U.S. puppy owners ages 18 and up was commissioned by Purina and

conducted by Dynata (formerly Research Now/SSI), an independent survey research firm, between July 12 and July 19, 2020. The maximum margin of sampling error was +/-5 percentage points with a 95 percent level of confidence. Puppy owners are defined by their dog's age and breed size: Toy, Small and Medium (under 12 months old) and Large and Giant (under 2 years old).

About North Shore Animal League America

Animal League America has saved more than 1,000,000 lives. As the world's largest no-kill rescue and adoption organization, we understand that a rescue isn't complete until each animal is placed into a loving home. Our innovative programs provide education to reduce animal cruelty and advance standards in animal welfare. We reach across the country to rescue animals from overcrowded shelters, unwanted litters, puppy mills, natural disasters and other emergencies and find them permanent, loving homes.

www.animalleague.org

SOURCE Purina

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