

# 5 Steps

## If Your Dog's Been on Grain Free Food

Recent reports from the FDA and veterinary cardiologists suggest a link between heart disease and certain boutique dog foods. Here's what pet owners should do:

1



### Read the FDA Alert (1). Then read the Davis update (2).

Certain boutique diets may be associated with dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM.) Pet foods of concern are grain free, have exotic proteins, or have legumes and/or potatoes as main ingredients. We don't yet know why.

2



### Talk to your vet about testing.

Testing for taurine involves an easy blood draw. Samples should be sent directly to UC Davis! Guidelines are online (3).

Test before you change foods for accurate results.

3



### Figure out your food plan.

Don't supplement taurine unless advised to by your vet. Each pet has different needs. Your vet can help! There are many appropriate diets available.

4



### If there's a problem, get an echo.

Pets with signs of heart failure should have an echocardiogram with a cardiologist. If your pet has low taurine and normal heart function, decide with your vet the appropriate next steps.

Coughing, exercise intolerance, and difficulty breathing need to be addressed immediately. Many pets recover with appropriate treatment.

5



### Report data to the FDA.

The FDA reporting portal is available online (4). This data is essential for our understanding of what is happening.

1 <https://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/ResourcesforYou/AnimalHealthLiteracy/ucm616279.htm>

2 <https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/news/uc-davis-investigates-link-between-dog-diets-and-deadly-heart-disease>

3 <https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/labs/amino-acid-laboratory>

4 <https://www.safetyreporting.hhs.gov/SRP2/en/Home.aspx?sid=d4dbedd2-3f40-49ad-9471-2aef68acc47a>