



**Tidewater**  
VETERINARY

## “You are what you eat”

At Tidewater Veterinary, we really focus on preventive medicine, and nutrition is an important part of this.

Every pet is different, so we should look at them individually to see what they need out of a diet. Are they energetic? Are they at their optimal weight? Do they have a nice coat? Is their stool solid? How often do they have bowel movements? Do they act like they are starving? While there are certainly other factors that affect these things, diet is an important contributing factor, and it's one that you can control.

There is a lot of controversy regarding the “best diet,” especially considering recent food recalls. While there is not one single diet that we can call “the best,” we can assess your pet to decide his or her specific needs and find the best diet for them.

**When choosing a food, think about your pet’s needs.** Then take a look at the ingredients on back of the bag or can. The first two or three ingredients should list the **protein source**; whole meat or meal is ideal. Avoid “animal protein” if possible, and look instead for the source to be named (i.e. beef, chicken, fish, etc.). Corn is not an ideal source of protein or as a grain for cats or dogs. Rice, brown rice, oatmeal, barley, and sweet potato are good **carbohydrate sources**. For **fat sources**, chicken fat is much higher quality instead of poultry fat or beef tallow. Good **fiber sources** include pumpkin seed, flaxseed, pea fiber, and fresh vegetables; steer away from soy mill run, peanut hulls, and wheat middling. Lastly, try to avoid artificial preservatives, such as BHA, BHT, and ethoxyquin, and artificial dyes. Tocopherols and rosemary are often used effectively as natural preservatives.

After choosing a quality food, the important thing for you to do is to monitor how your pet reacts to the diet. What works for one pet may not work for another. If you have any questions or would like more guidance, please feel free to ask at your next appointment, or call if you would like to speak before then.

We recommend:

**Dolittle's**

885 Houston Northcutt Boulevard  
Mount Pleasant, SC  
(843) 971-8650

**Hairy Winston**

1605 Palmetto Grande Drive, Mt. Pleasant  
(843) 881-0800