

PREVENTATIVE HYDRATION, DIET, ELMINIATION & EXERCISE REQUIREMENTS for a Healthy Dalmatian

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Dalmatians have the potential to become urate crystal and/or stone formers during their lifetime. There is also a potential for Dalmatians (or any breed/mixed-breed dog) to form other types of urinary stones in fairly high incidence as indicated by statistics from the University of Minnesota Urolith Lab. Current trends through 2011, show calcium oxalate stones are on the rise in all-breeds of dogs at 42% vs. Purine (urate salts, uric acid) stones at only 4.2%.¹

Do not let this low percentage of urate type stones comfort you into not following this recommended preventative protocol! Urinary stones are a very serious and life threatening condition and the potential of this happening to your dog is not to be taken lightly. The data quoted above is from the stones that are turned into the Minnesota Lab. The actual percentages of all stones for all dogs could be much higher. It is very important that you submit your dog's debris or stones to the designated lab for proper diagnosis and treatment of your own dog as well as providing helpful information for the future well-being of the entire breed and all canines.

In order to minimize the potential for your Dalmatian to obstruct or have problems urinating you should follow a simple protocol of **HYDRATION, DIET**, frequent **URINE ELIMINATION & EXERCISE**. This protocol is also a healthy choice for any breed of dog.

It is absolutely critical that you do the following things:

HYDRATION: The amount of water and quality of water your Dalmatian intakes is crucial.

AMOUNT: It is very important that you put water on your Dalmatian's dry kibble when you feed them. This forces the dog to drink more water and thus flush out their systems more thoroughly. I personally add enough water to cover the kibble, yet not make it float. Clean, fresh water should be available to your Dalmatian at all times.

QUALITY: The water should not be high in minerals, calcium and other particles that are conducive to stone formation. Many Dalmatian owners only give their Dalmatians filtered or distilled water for their lifetimes. If the quality of your water is not excellent or if you have well water it is suggested that you buy a counter top water filter or distiller unit, or give your dog distilled bottled water.

DIET: It is important that your Dalmatian is fed a diet lower in purines, NOT protein, although they usually go hand-in-hand. I personally recommend Purina Pro Plan Chicken & Rice or Lamb & Rice, Purina ONE Chicken & Rice or Purina Selects Turkey & Barley. You should never feed a Dalmatian Beef-based or Liver-based foods or treats. Herring, Salmon, Duck are higher in purines are not suitable for a Dalmatian. Often times the really high-end specialty foods are way too rich and higher in purines. Please consult with your BREEDER on what to feed your Dalmatian.

URINE ELIMINATION: Frequent urine elimination is a key component in keeping your Dalmatian stone free. It is important that the bladder is relieved or "flushed out" several times during the day. Crystals/Stones are formed when the urine stays too long in the bladder. Stagnant urine provides the environment for particles to form into crystals or stones. A bladder infection can also lead to crystals or stones.

EXERCISE: The amount of exercise is very important. If a dog has frequent and regular exercise they will be consuming more water. The activity/exercise will increase their drinking and elimination. So exercise your Dalmatian often for a happy and healthy dog.

NOTE:

Should your dog develop urinary crystals or stones, it is critical that the debris be sent to the University of Minnesota Urolith Lab for complete composition analysis. Treatment for one type of stone can make other types of stones worse! Please contact your BREEDER ASAP as they will have information or can help find contacts that can help you make the best decisions for your dog! Remember your vet is a general practitioner, and although an expert on general dog care, he/she is usually not an expert in Dalmatian specific care. Many welcome information being provided to them from educated sources.

¹ Minnesota Urolith Center: Part One: Veterinary canine urolith epidemiology: 1981-2011

Mineral composition trends have been stabilizing in recent years.

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