

Why is your foster dog on z/d or Ultamino?

Dogs with atopy or severe allergies often have symptoms from multiple sources, including food and environmental triggers. To help manage your foster's allergies, our veterinarian has started them on a strict prescription diet.

How does a diet trial work?

A diet trial is a test period where your foster pet eats **only** a prescription food designed to avoid triggering allergies. Removing all other foods allows us to see whether symptoms improve.

Diet trials take time. Early improvement may appear within a few weeks, but the full trial lasts 8 to 12 weeks.

A full evaluation requires completing the entire trial with no accidental exposures.

During this period we will also treat any secondary skin or ear infections the allergy has caused. Skin and ears need several weeks to rebuild a healthy barrier, and longer if infections have been chronic.

Consistency is key! Even a tiny amount of another food can trigger an allergic response and set back progress.

How z/d or Ultamino helps.

z/d or Ultamino are prescription hydrolyzed protein diets. The proteins in this food are broken down into very small pieces that the immune system does not recognize. This helps prevent allergic reactions and allows the skin and digestive tract to heal.

What to avoid during a diet trial.

Your foster dog must not have:

- Any other kibble or canned food
- Regular treats
- Table scraps or human food
- Flavored chews, bones, nylabones, or rawhides
- Flavored pill pockets or flavored medications

If you are unsure whether something is allowed, just ask!

So, what CAN my foster dog have?

Your foster dog can still have treats, training rewards, or something to hide medications in.

The following are ok in small amounts!

- Vegan marshmallows
- Coconut whipped cream
- Canned z/d if ok by medical team
- z/d treats if ok by medical team

If you need more treat ideas, enrichment activities, or puzzle feeders, we can definitely help! You can also freeze z/d or Ultamino kibble and water together for enrichment, just don't add anything else in!

What if my foster eats something they shouldn't have?

Accidents happen!

- Return to feeding only z/d or Ultamino
- Let us know what they ate and how much.
- Watch for symptoms over the next few days.
- Prevent future access by securing trash, storing food out of reach, and reminding visitors of their dietary needs.

What to watch for:

Keep an eye on the following and update us as needed:

- Changes in itching (keeping a daily log can help you keep track)
- Changes in stool or vomiting
- Ear redness, debris, scratching, or head shaking
- Skin flare-ups (redness, bumps, flaky skin)
- Appetite changes
- Any accidental exposure to foods other than z/d and ultamino

Tracking these details helps us evaluate whether the diet is working.

