

Is garlic safe for dogs?

By Lisa S. Newman, PhD - [Senior Editor, Animal Wellness Magazine](#)



The answer is yes! Find out why garlic has received such a bad rap, and how it can actually benefit your pet's health.

Garlic has long been regarded as a beneficial herb. Yet many people believe it's harmful to dogs and should never be fed. The truth is, it is safe and even beneficial in small doses. So why do so many think it's toxic?



Some background on garlic

For centuries, garlic has been used as a primary remedy for a large number of symptoms. And as long as people have been using it, they have also been feeding it to their animal companions. Some animals even enjoy foraging for it, as my dog, Lady, loved to do.

Garlic's properties have proven far-reaching, easily assimilated, and safe. In the past 80 years, during holistic medicine's rebirth in the United States, it has been in the forefront of both human care and animal husbandry.

Every textbook I have researched on herbal medicine that also mentions pet care recommends garlic, especially for its incredible anti-parasitic, anti-carcinogenic and antiseptic properties. In my own experience, it has also benefited animals with valley fever (*Coccidioidomycosis*), heartworm/fleas/ticks, IBS, diabetes, liver, heart and kidney disease, allergies, uncontrollable staph infections (that are non-responsive to all antibiotic protocols), and a host of other conditions. Garlic is also a staple in my preventative protocols.

Separating fact from fiction



For the last few decades, however, garlic has been regarded as toxic to dogs. This is primarily because it's a "kissing cousin" of the onion, which definitely *is* toxic to dogs. Onions trigger Heinz body hemolytic anemia. This is because they have a high concentration of thiosulphate. Garlic, on the other hand, simply does not contain the same thiosulphate concentration as onions do. In fact, the thiosulphate in it is barely traceable and readily excreted. "Onions have about 15 times the ability of garlic to damage red blood cells," says nutritionist Dr. Dave Summers on *IndigoPetz.com*.

Almost all the "evidence" against garlic for dogs comes from a 2000 study at Hokkaido University. Four dogs were each fed 1.25 ml of garlic extract each per kilogram of body weight for seven days straight. Although none of the dogs showed any outward toxicity symptoms, and none developed anemia, there was an effect on their red blood cells, leading the researchers to state that foods containing it should not be given to dogs. However, a subsequent study showed that allicin is beneficial to the health of mammals. This encouraged the scientists to reverse their earlier 2000 recommendations against garlic for dogs and actually recommend it to promote immune function and prevent cardiovascular diseases.



It's important to note that there can be multiple causes for Heinz body hemolytic anemia. Veterinarian Dr. Wendy Wallner says that conventional medications such as acetaminophen and benzocaine-containing topical preparations can cause this disease in dogs. The latter preparations probably account for many cases of Heinz body hemolytic anemia, since ingredients in creams are absorbed through the skin, allowing toxins to build up in the bloodstream.



Using garlic and choosing a product



of garlic, go ahead. Again, talk to a vet before supplementing with garlic, but don't be afraid of these healthful little cloves!

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Dr. Lisa Newman is internationally renowned as a natural pet care pioneer and formulator of over 100 products, plus over 800 protocols for all types of animal and human conditions (azmira.com). These are used to supplement her Holistic Animals Care LifeStyle®. She is a researcher, educator, author of nine books, and has been a speaker/spokesperson since 1982. Dr. Newman's work has been used at the Veterinary College, Holistic Animal Care School of Osaka, Japan.

