

I have a 9 month old Bichon pup and she is a very picky eater. I also have cats and have discovered that the puppy likes the cat food better than her own food. Would it be bad for her to have dry cat food instead of her puppy food?

First we need to determine if she is getting enough nutrition from the food that she is eating even though it might not seem like much to you. Does she have plenty of energy? Is she a good weight for her size? You should be able to feel her ribs under her fluffy coat, but they shouldn't be too prominent. At 9 months, she is close to full grown, so she may be naturally cutting back on her food intake now that her growing period has passed. Are you still feeding three times a day? At her age, twice a day should be sufficient. If in fact, she is not eating enough, then there are lots of things to try. A sprinkling of cat food mixed in with her dog food wouldn't be bad, but if she only picks out the cat food, she won't be getting the proper ratio of nutrients for a dog as cats have higher protein requirements.

Try other type of puppy food to see if she likes it better, or add warm water to her current food to make gravy. You can also add a spoonful of canned food to the dry to make it more appealing. There are several vitamin/mineral supplement powders that are made to have a very appealing flavor when added to dog food. Another option is home cooking. If you want to consider making a homemade diet for her, your veterinarian should be able to direct you to nutritionally balanced recipes or to a veterinary nutritionist who can formulate one for you.

If your Bichon's weight and health are fine but your concern is that she is leaving food in her bowl, then you may be overfeeding, and need to just cut back a little on what you are offering her at each meal.

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