

Many pet owners, horse owners, and veterinarians believe that supplements can benefit animals at every stage of life. These products are provided to support good nutrition and targeted health benefits throughout an animal's lifespan. They contain ingredients such as glucosamine, chondroitin, MSM, probiotics, vitamins, minerals, and herbs, with targeted health benefits that can support normal physiologic structure and healthy function of their bodies. Animal health supplements can come in many forms, such as tablets, capsules, powders, pastes, liquids, and soft chews and are intended for consumption by companion animals such as dogs, cats, and horses. There are two categories of animal supplements: feed/food supplements and health supplements.<sup>1</sup>

### **Animal Food or Nutritional Supplements**

Animal food supplements are products formulated with essential nutrients that provide nutritional benefits in conjunction with a complete and balanced diet. Examples may include:

- Vitamins and minerals
- Skin and coat products
- Fiber-based products
- Essential fatty acid products

The labels on pet food supplements contain information similar to that found on dog and cat food or treat packages. The front panel displays the brand name, product name, intended use (what the product is for), and the intended animal species. The back and/or side panels provide nutritional information about the product, including the guaranteed analysis, calorie content, ingredients, directions for use, feeding instructions, and contact information. Additionally, a lot number generally appears somewhere on the label or container.

### **Animal Health Supplements**

Animal health supplements are products containing non-nutritive functional ingredients that help maintain or support normal physiological structure and function of the body and typically support a specific body system. Examples may include:

- Hip and joint support
- Calming aids
- Hairball Products
- Immune Support
- Organ-specific support (e.g., heart, brain)
- Urinary tract support

The front panel of an animal health supplement label displays the brand name, product name, intended use, and intended animal species. The back or side panels display the beneficial active ingredients, inactive ingredients, cautions, and claims describing the product's targeted health benefits, directions for use, warnings, and contact information. A lot number should also appear somewhere on the label or container.

### **About the National Animal Supplement Council (NASC)**

Founded in 2001, NASC is a nonprofit trade association with a clear mission: **To promote the health and well-being of companion animals and horses given animal health and nutritional supplements by their owners and to protect and enhance the animal supplement industry.** Members of the NASC are concerned and committed manufacturers of animal health supplements from around the world. Together they endeavor to improve the quality and consistency of these products sold to consumers for the benefit of their dogs, cats, horses and other companion animals. NASC member companies collectively address issues and affect important change, which ultimately elevates the industry and results in better practices, procedures, and products.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nasc.cc/pet-university/basic-understanding-of-the-two-categories-of-pet-supplements/>