



## Puppy

# PUPPY GROWTH RATES

Compared to smaller dogs, large and giant breed puppies have more rapid growth rates and reach full skeletal maturity, i.e., adult life stage, later. In general, by breed size, full skeletal maturity is reached at the following ages:



Puppies should be fed a complete and balanced growth diet (puppy food) until they reach full skeletal maturity. Feeding large and giant breed puppies a less energy-dense growth diet formulated specifically for large and giant breeds can help reduce excessively rapid growth rates, which helps protect against the development of skeletal abnormalities and excess body weight.

Feed all puppies to maintain lean body condition. Purina research has shown that maintaining a lean body condition from puppyhood onward can reduce skeletal problems and extend a dog's healthy life by up to 15%.

### Additional Resources

Larsen, J. (2010). Feeding large-breed puppies. *Compendium: Continuing Education for Veterinarians*, 32(5), E1-E4.

Kealy, R. D., Lawler, D. F., Ballam, J. M., Mantz, S. L., Biery, D. N., Greeley, E. H., Lust, G., Segre, M., Smith, G. K., & Stowe, H. D. (2002). Effects of diet restriction on life span and age-related changes in dogs. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 220(9), 1315-1320. doi:10.2460/javma.2002.220.1315

The Purina Institute aims to help put nutrition at the forefront of pet health discussions by providing user-friendly, science-based information that helps pets live longer, healthier lives.