



DOGS TEST THE TASTE: IS THERE DIFFERENCE IN TASTE OF PLACEBO AND THE PRODUCT?

When planning the experiment involving ingestible products such as medicine or nutriment, one must consider that placebo and product can taste different thus there can be difference in willingness to eat.

Research population

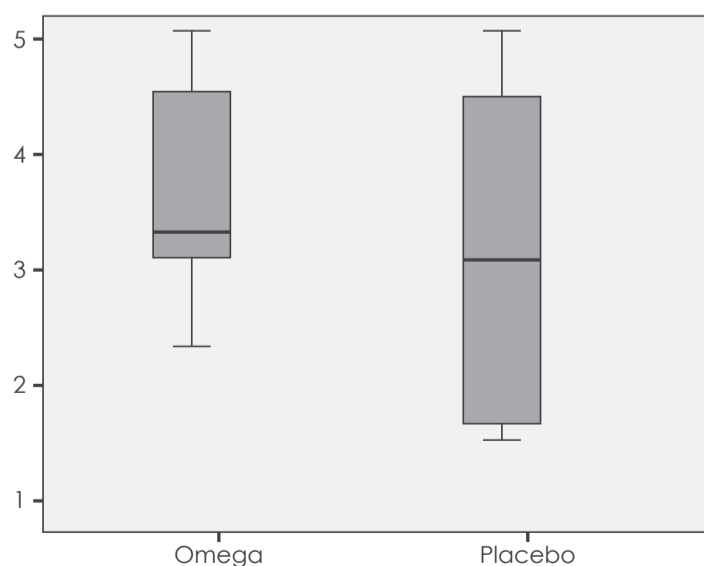
For our fatty acid experiment, we tested with 17 dogs (6 breeds) their willingness to eat placebo and nutriment (Omega fatty acid-based). Every individual had one week with placebo and other week with nutriment. The dogs were randomized who started first week with placebo or nutriment. Owners were blinded and did not know whether dog was eating nutriment or placebo.

Owner filled questionnaire

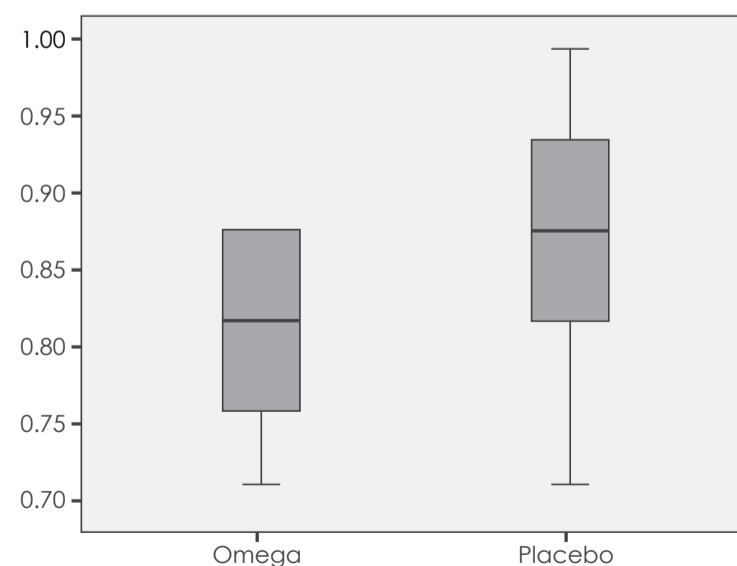
- Willingness to eat (score 0-5)
- Eating the test tablet (yes/no)

Results

- There was no difference in willingness to eat between placebo or nutriment (avg. 3,71 for nutriment and avg. 2,77 for placebo, $p = 0,93$ (Wilcoxon rank test)).
- Both nutriment and placebo were eaten and digested equally well ($p = 0,248$, Wilcoxon rank test)
- There were variations between different breeds but it was not significant ($p = 0,93$, Wilcoxon rank test)
- The results mean that nutriment and its placebo are safe to use in further research, and the taste will not affect to the results.



Graph 1. In owner-filled questionnaire, the owners answered every day for two weeks in scale to 0-5 how willing to dog was to eat. Owners were blinded. There was no difference in willingness to eat (avg. 3,71 for nutriment and avg. 2,77 for placebo).



Graph 2. In the owner-filled questionnaire, the owner answered if dog digested the tablet (yes/no). Both nutriment and placebo were eaten and digested equally well.