



WHY RAW FOOD FOR PETS?

Benefits

- Vibrant Skin & Coat
- Stable, Healthy Weight
- Healthy Digestion
- Improved Immune System
- Reduced Allergy Symptoms
- Healthy Teeth
- Proper Endocrine Balance
- Improved Energy and Behavior

Learn More

Check out these books:

- *Raw Dog Food: make it easy for you & your dog*
- *The BARF Diet*
- *Ultimate Diet: natural nutrition for dogs & cats*
- *Real Food for Dogs & Cats*

Online Resources:

- perfectlyrawsome.com
- keepthetailwagging.com
- freshfoodconsultants.org
- feline-nutrition.org

Related Pet Health Guides

- Raw Food Basics
- Switching Cats to New Foods

A Species-Appropriate, Ancestral Diet

Commercial dry and canned food diets for dogs and cats are only about 100 years old and were originally developed to supplement a fresh food diet. Our pet's digestive systems haven't really changed in that time. For thousands of years before that they were eating real food. For cats that meant the carcasses of animals they killed. For dogs that meant the carcasses of animals they killed or scavenged, and a little grazing on fruits and vegetables when prey animals were scarce. A fresh food diet that recreates a prey carcass for your pet is the most natural diet there is. They're adaptable but the rate of chronic disease continues to rise as we rely more and more on processed, starchy diets for them.

Why Raw?

High heat cooking destroys a lot of the nutrients in food, changing the nutritional balance of vitamins and minerals. This is why processed foods have these nutrients added artificially. Enzymes are also destroyed by cooking. While our pets can supply some of the needed digestive enzymes from their pancreas, if they are fed processed diets for long periods of time it can deplete the pancreas, creating a domino effect of illness in the body. If the diet is easier to digest, their body can better attend to other health issues such as allergies, joint problems, and immune dysfunction.

Is It Dangerous?

Feeding a raw diet is no more dangerous than feeding a commercial diet, common sense food handling habits should be used for all pet foods. In addition, the microbes that worry us are of no consequence to a cat or dog because their highly acidic stomach acid and short digestive tract prevent these microbes from growing to problematic levels.

Can ALL Dogs & Cats Eat A Raw Diet?

The simple answer is no. All healthy cats and dogs should thrive on a raw diet. Unfortunately some of our pets suffer from chronic illnesses that effect their digestive system. Many of these animals, with careful monitoring, can eventually switch to a raw diet, but some pet's systems are too damaged to handle much of any change to their diet. Also, some pets are on immune-suppressing treatments, such as those for cancer, which can put them at risk for bacterial infections that would not be a risk to a healthy animal.

Is It Nutritionally Balanced?

There are many excellent prepared raw diets on the market that are as nutritionally complete as the best dry or canned diets. However, no diet is "complete" for every pet. Owners must be sensible about feeding their pet, and be knowledgeable about the foods they are feeding and how they meet the needs of their pet. Supplementation is an important way adjust any diet to the individual pet's needs. It is also important for owners to educate themselves about the basics of the raw food diets so if prepared from scratch it is done properly.

