

THE RAW DIET

Before you decide to switch to the raw diet, please order and read the following 2 books by Dr. Ian Billinghurst.

Give Your Dog a Bone and Bones Are Raw Food Too

can be ordered from [Direct Books](#)

WHY FEED RAW?

It is by far, the healthiest diet out there! Consider this:

Let's take a look at a true "image" of a modern dog!!

1. **First and foremost, your dog is a carnivore. That means they love to eat other animals. Dogs will happily eat the internal organs, the meat, and the bones from other animals. It doesn't matter whether you are talking about a Chihuahua, a Poodle or a Great Dane—they love to eat this way!**
2. **Your dog is a vegetarian. One of the first things eaten by a wolf or wild dog when it kills, are the stomach and intestinal contents. These contain fermenting grass and similar plant materials. Wild dogs and modern dogs love to eat fruit of different kinds—especially if it is overripe. They scavenge around the bottom of fruit trees. They dine regularly at the compost heap. I have one girl that I baited regularly in the ring with green grapes. She loved them! Remember when feeding vegetables, they should be pulverized until they resemble the gut contents of an animal.**
3. **Your dog is a scavenger. You only have to leave your dog alone with an open garbage can to find that out. Dogs will eat and derive food value from practically anything. To a wild dog, soil eating is an important source of minerals. Bark from trees is an important source of fiber. Dogs receive valuable nutrients from material that we humans find totally repugnant. Things like vomit, feces, and decaying flesh.**

This habit of eating feces (called "Coprophagy") is common with many dogs that eat commercial dog food. Why? To try to stay healthy! Feces are a highly valuable food, consisting of the dead and living bodies of millions of bacteria. They are an excellent source of essential fatty acids, fat soluble vitamins (particularly vitamin K and the whole range of B vitamins), many different minerals because of the soil in it, and a host of other nutritional factors including anti-oxidants, enzymes and fiber. The feces they eat is of far greater benefit to them than the product peddled by the dog food companies!

If you don't want your dog to eat feces (and most of us don't) then you must provide in the diet all those nutrients which are currently missing from your dog's diet, and which feces supplies. This requires a team of ingredients like yogurt, eggs, polyunsaturated oils, an enzyme supplement, crushed raw vegetables as a source of fiber, etc.

4. **Your dog is a hunter. Dogs will eat anything that moves. This starts at a very young age with insects, beetles, ants, lizards—whatever walks, crawls or slithers into it's path. As time passes, birds and small animals are tackled. Later on, with the help of other dogs, larger prey such as deer, sheep, goats, cattle etc. are eaten.**
5. **Your dog is an opportunist. This means that a hungry dog will take the opportunity to eat whatever food is available. Many dogs survive happily on the contents of garbage cans! When you think about it, a dog roaming the streets, seeking out it's own food is living closer to nature and**

the lifestyle designed by evolution, than dogs fed a consistent "100% complete" dead commercial dog food. It may not have the same foods it's ancestors had to choose from, but at the same time it is not limited by what some humans or dog food company chooses for it. Much of the food is raw, including vegetable peelings, rotten fruit, and some bones.

6. Your dog is an omnivore. The fact that your dog is a carnivore, a vegetarian, a scavenger, a hunter and an opportunist means that he is an omnivore. This means a dog can eat practically anything in the way of food. In fact so far as eating goes, your dog is one of the most versatile creatures on earth!! He will survive on just about anything we care to throw at him, even commercial dog food!!

COMMON SENSE

A good starting point is to examine some of the widely held "beliefs" to see if they make sense or are more or less nonsense.

- Everybody knows that---The digestive system of the modern domesticated dog is much "weaker" than a wild dog's and that is why modern dogs have to be fed differently to their wild counterparts.

NONSENSE!! This belief is based on nothing more than somebody's opinion. There have been no scientific studies to back it up. Although mankind may have changed the outward appearance of the dog over the last few thousand years, and developed a large variety of shapes and forms for practical or esthetic reasons, **THE INTERNAL WORKINGS INCLUDING THE ENTIRE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM, AND THE WAY FOOD IS UTILIZED FOR GROWTH, MAINTENANCE, REPAIR AND REPRODUCTION, IS FUNDAMENTALLY THE SAME IN ALL DOGS—BOTH WILD AND DOMESTICATED.**

COMMONSENSE—If the internal workings have not changed, then a study of the foods eaten by wild dogs, should provide us with a sound basis for feeding modern dogs!!

- Everybody knows that--Dogs should not eat raw bones and all dog food should be **COOKED** to kill all the bad bacteria.

NONSENSE—Dogs fed only cooked and processed food will always develop a weakened immune system and poor dental health.

COMMONSENSE—From centuries of practical experience dogs thrive on a **RAW** diet.

- Everybody knows that—Each meal you feed your dog should be complete and balanced,
- It is impossible without a university education in dog nutrition to be able to successfully feed a dog,
- And of course—the best way to ensure proper nutrition is by feeding only (fill in appropriate brand name) commercial dog food.

Do I really have to say it?? O.K.—**NONSENSE!!** This "modern" idea was devised for no other reason than to enable the sale of pet foods. Massive "education" campaigns inundate the media to convince you that "You cannot feed your dog properly...but we can". Even many vets have become convinced that feeding a dog is a very complicated process and best left to the "experts".

The major "fear" that is exploited in the pet food industry is centered around the concept that "every meal must be completely balanced". Unfortunately, even "holistic" animal lovers and some authors of "how to" books have fallen into this trap.

COMMONSENSE—Ask yourself the question...is that the way you design your own meals? Each of them totally balanced with every conceivable nutrient present that you require? Of course you don't. No creature since life began has eaten that way!!

You don't have to be a rocket scientist to realize that in nature, a "wild" dog will achieve a balanced diet over a period of time that can range from a few days to a few weeks. Never at each meal and never consistent. The attempt to put all the nutrients a dog requires into one commercial product is responsible for much unnecessary suffering and poor health. It is an insidious way of slowly ensuring a shorter life span for your animal and is guaranteed to sooner or later make your veterinarian a little richer.

Dr. Ian Billinghurst in Australia provides an outstanding insight to confirm this concept. In his words:

"As a veterinary student in the early seventies, I found it hard to understand why Aussie vets had fewer and simpler dog and cat diseases to deal with than the Americans. It seemed to make the Aussie vet somehow inferior. We did not need to be trained to the same high degree of complexity and sophistication.

There was a simple explanation. At that time, more than seventy percent of Aussie dogs were still fed raw bones and scrapes. They were still pretty healthy.

American dogs had been eating processed food and no bones for decades. They had developed a wide range of problems. Their vets had been forced to develop a complex set of diagnostic and therapeutic tools to deal with them.

I need not have worried. Our dogs' disease problems are increasing on a par with their increasing consumption of processed and cooked foods. We Aussie vets now have to be as good as our American counterparts to deal with them."

In *What's Really in the Pet Food* we did outline some basic information on commercial pet foods. To totally cover the subject would probably take a book or two but there are a few additional things that you should know about, that will serve to give you a strong indication of the reason behind many of the health problems we are seeing.

At one time or another, most breeders become concerned with the kind of preservatives or chemicals contained in a particular dog food. It's amazing however, that seldom (if ever) do they question the major faults found in almost every brand of commercial pet food. While on the "net" I have come across long winded discussions on the "right" percentage of protein, etc. for this or that, along with a multitude of opinions on lamb vs.. beef or chicken, rice vs.. wheat and on and on. To my mind this is an exercise in futility.

The label might say it contains meat and meat by-products. What does this mean? It could mean lots of meat, or lots of by-products. Which by-products? They could be liver and hearts. They could also be feathers and feet! How would you know?

Look at protein levels. Is that level good or bad? How would you know? Is it good quality protein? Is it easily digested protein? How would you know? (Actually it's a pretty safe bet to assume the protein is low quality and poorly digestible).

What about fat? Is there enough? Is there too much? Is it the right sort with plenty of essential fatty acids? How would you know? What about added vitamins. Are there enough? How would you know?

It's utter nonsense to assume that the pet food manufacturers make pet food for the sake of keeping your dog healthy. Common sense tells you that their prime motivation is to make money!!

I could go on but I think you get the point! You must realize that what is on the label is no indication of the actual nutritional value to your animal!! It is possible to produce a pet food based on shoe leather, used motor oil, coal and water, which if analyzed would meet the legal requirements necessary for it to be sold as pet food. By law, pet foods are not required to contain optimum or best levels of each nutrient. They can claim to be "nutritionally complete" as long as they contain certain minimum levels to prevent obvious deficiency symptoms. The law does not require that nutrient levels be kept below a safe maximum level either!

Consequently we see excesses of protein, calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, and sodium to be common in pet foods. So what, you may ask?

Lets take excess calcium as an example because it is probably one of the most common problems. The calcium combines with zinc, producing a compound which cannot be absorbed, resulting in a zinc deficiency. This lack of zinc is involved in skeletal and growth problems, skin problems, infertility in both sexes, sugar Diabetes, Pancreatitis,... the list goes on and on.

The excessive calcium in dry dog foods is heavily implicated as a cause of bloat in the adult dog and of skeletal problems in growing dogs!!

Excess protein can result in kidney disease, excess sodium can cause heart disease, excess magnesium causes bladder stones...and on and on and on!

Lets take a quick look at how mother nature designed the dog to eliminate the problem of calcium combining with zinc. In the "wild" a dog would obtain the zinc, copper, iron etc. when it eats the liver of another animal. Normally the liver will be eaten along with maybe the gut contents and perhaps some of the muscle meat.

The calcium is eaten at another meal when he eats the bones. Seldom, if ever will both be consumed at the same time. Even if bones are eaten with the other foods, the digestion of the bones will be relatively slow, while organ tissue will be digested and absorbed much more quickly. This natural process of separating allows the kidneys to rest by not having to deal with high protein levels with every meal.

So the lesson for today is really "don't mess with Mother Nature—she's the only one that truly understands what is best for your animal".