

# Raw Food

Raw food is considered by many nutritional experts to be the best diet for dogs and cats since it most closely mimics their natural evolutionary diet. Dry kibble has only been popular for 50 or so years and was developed primarily for pet owner convenience, not for dietary improvements.

## **Benefits:**

By feeding raw food, you are giving your pet the meat and bone mixtures they were designed to eat. Because the food is raw, many of the enzymes and beneficial bacteria present in pre-cooked meats and bones are still available for consumption. These enzymes and bacteria help to keep teeth clean and stomachs healthy, balanced and strong. They also provide many of the nutrients necessary for good health, temperament and long lives.

Dogs, and especially cats, do not require grains or large amounts of carbohydrates in their diet. Many dry kibble formulas contain high amounts of these unnecessary grains, which can cause food intolerance and often obesity. Raw foods will help keep your pet lean. Raw bones also provide the perfect fiber source to keep their digestive system regular.

## **Products Available:**

There are many different ways to feed raw food. Whole, meaty bones, like chicken backs, chicken necks and small animal frames are inexpensive and easy to prepare. You could also choose ground meaty bone mixtures (available in a variety of protein sources) that include some vegetables and organs, and often mineral and vitamin supplements. A combination of raw bones and meaty bone mixtures is recommended to promote protein diversity and keep supplementation to a minimum.

## **How to Get Started:**

Conduct some research at home and talk to your vet. There are also many books available in our stores or online. It is extremely important to educate yourself about the proper way to feed raw food in order to ensure that your pet receives a well-balanced diet.

## **Safe Handling:**

Be sure to wash your hands frequently when working with raw food. Cleaning surfaces, bowls, etc. during the preparation process will help prevent the transfer of food borne illnesses.



### **Feeding Guidelines:**

Kittens can eat up to 10% of their current body weight per day, split into 3-4 meals. Adult cats should eat 2-3% of their current body weight for maintenance (adjust as necessary depending on ideal weight).

Puppies should be fed 4-6% of their body weight, divided over three meals. Large breed puppies (up to 12 months) should be fed like adult dogs, 2.5-3% of their body weight between three meals (adjust as necessary depending on ideal weight).

Feeding amounts include all food consumption: main diet, treats, bones, table scraps, etc. The above guidelines are intended to be used as a reference – the proper amount depends on your cat's activity level, age, environment and individual needs.

The majority of the diet should consist of raw meaty bones (whole or ground), 10-20% ground raw vegetables and 10% raw organ meat.

Other additions include eggs, yogurt, honey, and raw goat's milk. Daily supplements, such as fish oil, coconut oil, kelp powder and pre/probiotics can also be added. Your goal should be to provide a complete and balanced diet for your pet over time. Do not be concerned if the diet is not 100% balanced every day, but rather over the course of a week.

