

Dog Food: Ten Scary Truths



40% of dogs are obese ...

46% of dogs and 39% of cats now die of cancer...

Heart, kidney and liver disease are epidemic...

Like people, dogs *are* what they eat. Save your dog a lot of suffering, and save yourself a fortune in vet bills, by learning the truth about your dog's diet.

Here are 10 important things you may not know about what your dog's eating:

10 Scary Truths About Your Dog's Food

#1 Commercial Dog Food Is "Fast Food"

Heavily-processed fast foods (burgers, fries, tacos, etc.) as a big diet component can cause major health problems in people. How can fast foods be

good for dogs?

Only dog food manufacturers think this nonsense makes sense. Dogs and people share roughly 75% the same genetic makeup, and we have similar nutritional needs. What we're doing to our own health with processed foods, we're also doing to our dogs. And it's happening faster.

#2 People Food Is Good For Dogs

Despite what you've heard from friends, vets and pet food manufacturers, wholesome "people food" is *good* for dogs. People food is only bad for dog food *makers*.

The same fresh, nutritious foods people eat can offer your dog the nutrition he needs and save you a mountain of vet bills. It just takes a little education to learn the small differences between human and canine nutritional needs. (Hint: no onions, grapes or raisins. Rinse off rich spices and sauces. Go easy on carbs and avoid wheat and corn.)

#3 Don't Presume The Food Your Vet Sells Is A Superior Product

Veterinarians, like medical doctors, learn relatively little about nutrition in school.

Much of what they do learn comes directly from pet food company vets, sales reps, articles, studies, and seminars.

If your vet hasn't studied and experimented on his or her own with raw or homemade diets, it's unlikely that he or she knows bad food from good, and may be acting on outdated information or superstition. And if vets profit from selling one brand, and not another, they have a conflict of interest that may influence their opinions. (Some may even be prohibited by a manufacturer from selling more than one brand.)

#4 The Quality Of Processed Commercial Foods Is Suspect

Dog food may legally contain “4-D” meat: meat from dead, dying, diseased and disabled animals.

Add a little road kill, mill floor sweepings labeled as grain, and corn contaminated with high levels of pesticide (yes, really) and you have a recipe for ill health. The cheaper the food, the cheaper the ingredients, the worse the nutrition.

Read the labels!

#5 Kibble Does *Not* Clean Teeth

Almost all dogs age three and over have dental diseases. Most of these dogs eat kibble. That should tell you something.

Although a small study once suggested that kibble *might* clean teeth better than canned food, *better* doesn't mean *effectively*. Hoping to avoid brushing our dog's teeth, we too willingly grasp at kibble's unsubstantiated health benefits. But pretending that kibble or hard treats will keep teeth clean will only lead to huge vet bills, lost teeth and much canine suffering.

#6 “Complete And Balanced” Does *Not* Mean “Optimum”

“Complete and balanced” means that a food meets minimal *theoretical* health requirements for the average dog.

Food boasting that it conducted Feeding Trials often just test only the lead product in a line of foods. Trials, too, are for only a small number of dogs for a short period of time. Over time, nutrient and enzyme deficiencies are inevitable.

Of course, complete and balanced is better than *not* complete and balanced, but again, *better* does not mean *good*.

#7 Feeding The Same Food Day After Day Limits Nutrition

Imagine eating corn, rancid fat and chicken wings (without meat) every meal of your life, with the same mix of cheap vitamins and minerals added...

Nutritionists urge people to eat a variety of foods, both for improved nutrition and also to prevent allergies. Dogs need variety, too.

But variety can cause gastrointestinal upset in dogs, right?

In the short run, yes. Nutritionally-deprived animals have sick guts. In fact, intestinal upset when switching foods is a sign your dog *needs* more variety. Once good nutrition has healed a dog's digestive system, the dog can eat different foods every meal — just as people do. Just switch foods gradually over several weeks while your dog's gut heals.

#8 Kibble Is *Not* Better Than Canned

Whereas canned food is preserved by the process of canning, most kibble is preserved artificially. (Ever contemplate how much preservative must be required to retard spoilage of food left out all day?)

Kibble begins as a dry cooked meal whereas canned food is canned fresh. Kibble is exposed to more heat than canned (destroying nutrients). Worse yet, kibble is linked to kidney and bladder problems in cats, and to bloat, a deadly problem especially for large, broad-chested dogs. It's also dehydrating. Of course, canned isn't perfect either. Fresh is best, raw or cooked. Next best is frozen prepared food and then dehydrated and freeze dried foods, all available at better pet stores.

#9 Some Common Foods Can Be Hazardous To Canine Health

Cooked bones and rawhide chews can cause major health problems requiring emergency surgery.

Onions, grapes, raisins, chocolate, the article sweetener Xylitol and other common foods can be toxic for dogs and must be avoided.

#10 Corn Kills

Most kibble is loaded with corn, a cheap filler. Unfortunately, the corn isn't the luscious kind you and I eat.

It's feed corn (like cattle eat), or cheap feed corn remnants. Even corn meal *dust* counts as corn. The corn may even have been condemned for human consumption, there being no upper level of pesticide contamination for pet foods.

If that weren't bad enough, corn (which gives us both high fructose corn syrup and corn oil) is fattening. Any wonder so many dogs are obese and suffer from diabetes?

Improving your dog's diet can add years to your dog's life and save you a fortune. It doesn't require a lot of work or expense. It just requires a little knowledge and the desire to give your dog the healthy body he or she deserves.