



HOME PREPARED DIETS FOR DOGS

By Susan Moss, All The Best Pet Care

A BETTER STANDARD OF EATING

Increase your companion's health and longevity by incorporating fresh whole foods into the daily diet. As with human nutrition, dogs are healthiest when eating a wide variety of minimally processed foods. Unlike conventional pet foods with questionable ingredients cooked at high temperatures, food you prepare in your own kitchen will be brimming with all the enzymes, intact amino acids, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and other nutrients that Nature intended. Even though the top tier of high-quality pet foods has vastly improved ingredients and cooking methods, fresh unadulterated food, high in moisture and preferably raw, offers the best nutrition. You will have complete transparency and control of what goes in your pet's bowl, and also what's left out.

"LET YOUR FOOD BE YOUR MEDICINE" - HIPPOCRATES

Most of the health problems of dogs are caused by or made worse by poor nutrition – allergies, arthritis, runny eyes, infected ears, fleas, worms, weight problems, digestive problems, skin and coat problems and even dental decay. On the other hand, when the body's nutritional needs are met, it will have all the tools it needs to heal and repair itself. A change of food can bring about miraculous improvement, and even healthy animals will be glossier and more radiant than before. The most dramatic results occur in older animals. What we think of as the unavoidable effects of aging may be caused by nutritional deficiencies, and are often reversible.

CARNIVORES NEED MEAT

Dogs were designed to digest animal flesh, and they do best on a meat-based diet. Dogs are omnivores with a carnivorous past, and fresh raw meat composed of muscle, fat, bone and connective tissue should make up a major part of the diet, along with vegetables and some extras. "Meat" can include poultry, fish, organs and eggs, raw or lightly cooked—almost anything goes. One thing to avoid is raw Pacific salmon which can contain a liver fluke that

Ancestral Diet of Dogs:

- mostly meat and bone
- high in moisture
- low in carbohydrates
- about 50% protein, 20% fat
- predigested vegetation from stomach of prey

is lethal to dogs unless cooked. Any other cooked or raw fish is okay.

THE SAFETY OF RAW MEAT FOR DOGS

Dogs can neutralize harmful bacteria because of their strong stomach acids and short digestive transit time. They evolved as scavengers and carrion eaters as well as hunters, consuming spoiled food and half-rotted carcasses containing millions of bacteria. If an animal is severely immuno-compromised, however, you can gently cook the meat portion of the food before mixing with the other ingredients. Add a pinch of digestive enzymes just before serving to compensate for enzymes lost during cooking.

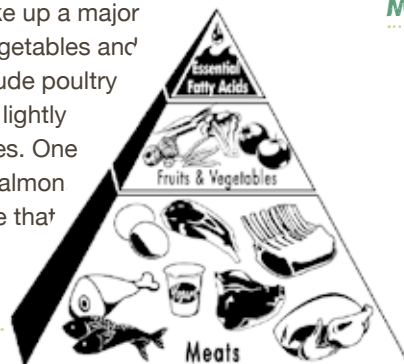
ORGAN MEATS

Organs contain many nutrients not found in muscle meat, and wild predators will eat them first. Liver is the most valuable, but kidney, heart, gizzards and tripe are very good, too. Since organs comprise 1/6 to 1/4 of a prey animal's body, try to use a similar proportion. Mix a bit in each meal, or feed an organ meal of beef or chicken liver once or twice a week, raw or lightly cooked.

MEAL REPLACEMENT BONES

An easy way to provide a species-appropriate diet is to feed "mono meals" of whole poultry parts, typically wings, backs or necks that can be digested completely. They are a great source of calcium, phosphorus and other minerals in the correct proportions. Unlike cooked bones, which can splinter and cause problems, raw bones are pliable and break off safely. A typical dog might consume a turkey neck or a few chicken wings in place of a meal. For small dogs, chicken or turkey necks can be hacked into smaller pieces,

CARNIVORE FOOD PYRAMID NO GRAINS REQUIRED



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HOME PREPARED DIETS FOR DOGS

CONTINUED

with an inch or two given at a time.

RECREATIONAL BONES

The harder bones are not meant to be consumed completely, even though they have some nutritional value. Dogs will gnaw on them for long periods, ingesting the small amount of meat and fat they contain. Beef or buffalo marrow bones are hardest, with delicious marrow in the middle. Knuckle bones are a bit softer, with tendons, ligaments and cartilage containing joint-building substances. Raw bones keep teeth clean and free of tartar, often eliminating the need for dental cleanings. Marrow bones are the most popular and higher in fat content. Knuckles are recommended for seniors, puppies and overweight dogs. Remove bones after a day or so when stripped clean. They may be given often, even every day, but you will probably want to alternate them with more nutritious poultry bones.

Whole chicken parts contain...

- Backs and necks: bone for calcium and other minerals
- Skin and fat: a superior source of essential fatty acids
- Muscle meat: protein and amino acids
- Bone marrow: blood-forming elements, copper, iron, & zinc
- Cartilage and gristle: connective tissues have glucosamine and chondroitin, arthritis preventatives
- Organs: kidneys attached to backs contribute protein, vitamins A, B, C, fatty acids, and zinc

CALCIUM - AN ALL-IMPORTANT MINERAL

Dogs need twice as much calcium in their diet as people do, and insufficient calcium is a big concern in home prepared diets. The canine requirement can be met by feeding whole poultry parts several times a week, or if ground meat with bone is used as a base for the complete meals. Otherwise, add one to two tablespoons human edible bone meal per pound of meat, or a calcium supplement such as **Animal Essentials Seaweed Calcium**.

VEGETABLES - ANTIOXIDANT SUPER FOODS

Raw vegetables in your dog's diet mimics the predigested stomach contents of wild prey. They contribute a wealth of cleansing, healing, nourishing and living nutrients, part of Nature's magic. Green vegetables and sprouts detoxify, cleanse and enliven. Orange vegetables sweeten food

and add cancer-fighting beta-carotene. Small amounts can create a powerful effect. The right amount can range from 5% to 25% of a meal. If there is too much, your dog may reject his food, or have loose stools. Seniors and overweight dogs can benefit most from larger amounts. Like other nutrients, however, vegetables do not need to be served every day or at every meal. And if your dog rejects them in his food, supplements can compensate.

Grinding vegetables in a food processor or pulping them in a juicer is the best way to release their nutrients, as dogs do not make the enzyme cellulase to break down the cellulose cell walls on their own. You can buy frozen ground vegetables or use a dehydrated vegetable mix. Almost any vegetable is okay in moderation except raw onions and raw white potatoes. Fruits can be included. Apples and berries are the most popular. Raw garlic, Nature's antibiotic, is appealing to dogs in small amounts, up to one clove per large dog per meal. Fresh ginger modulates blood sugar and helps to eliminate worms and other parasites from the digestive tract.

BALANCE OVER TIME, NOT EACH DAY

Carnivores are, by necessity, opportunists, and in the wild their diets would vary widely in content, amount and frequency. Unlike modern pet diets, each bite is not complete or identical. The body can store most nutrients until needed. It stores minerals in the skeletal system, and fat soluble vitamins in fat cells. As long as balance is achieved over a period of weeks, each meal can vary.

THE CASE FOR GRAINS

Grains have been discredited as a pet food ingredient because the industry has used them as cheap protein fillers. Glutens are vegetable proteins, most prevalent in corn and wheat, that are poorly utilized by dogs. Some dogs appear to be allergic to grains, although the real culprit may be the storage mites that contaminate grains stored too long that end up in cheap pet food.

But grains, when fed with meat protein, can be a cost-effective source of calories and energy for dogs. Whole grains such as oatmeal, rice, millet, barley, or buckwheat are best. They should be well-cooked, even mushy, and



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CONTINUED

make up less than 50% of the diet. Overweight dogs should limit their grain intake in order to slim down.

WHEN TO FEED, AND HOW MUCH

Most home feeders serve a simple morning meal of meaty bones and a combination evening meal. They may mix veggies with canned fish, cottage cheese or eggs in place of meat for more variety. There are many ways to do it, and what makes sense for you and your dog may be different from someone else.

How much to feed is a difficult question because each animal has a different metabolism and activity level, and caloric requirements can vary by 20%. Begin by feeding the same number of cups as the current food even though the moisture levels differ, and adjust up or down according to your animal's weight management needs.

Suggested daily quantities:

Tiny dog	7 – 15 lb.	1/4 to 1/2 lb. food daily	OR, 1/2 to 1 cup food daily
Small dog	16 – 25 lb.	1/2 to 3/4 lb. food daily	OR, 1 to 1 1/2 cups food daily
Medium dog	26 – 50 lb.	3/4 to 1 1/4 lb. food daily	OR, 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 cups food daily
Large dog	51 – 74 lb.	1 to 1 3/4 lb. food daily	OR, 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 cups food daily
Very large dog	75 – 100 lb.	1 3/4 to 2 1/4 lb. food daily	OR, 3 1/2 to 5 1/2 cups food daily
A puppy under six months may eat twice as much as an adult, and needs 2 or 3 meals a day.			

TRANSITIONING AND DETOXICATIONS

Switching to the new diet can be done all at once, or you can gradually replace a greater part of the regular food each day, drawing the process out for four to ten days. Warning: if you've been feeding grocery store food, the switchover should be very gradual. The digestive system needs time to adapt, and there could be odd-looking stools or throwing up of bony pieces at first. This is to be expected and will go away soon. Offer small quantities of meal replacement bones and observe your pet's response. Keep some plain canned pumpkin on hand, and add a small quantity to meals to firm up stools if necessary. Adding digestive enzymes will also help the transition.

Detoxification is when the body begins to get rid of accumulated toxins. There may be foul or mucous-y stools, expelling of worms, or an accelerated shedding of coat or flaky skin as the body makes new coat and skin. These effects should be short-lived and resolve quickly.

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AMAZING BONE BROTH

Long revered as a traditional remedy, homemade bone broth is a source of important minerals, amino acids, gelatin, collagen and other healing nutrients. Feeding bone broth speeds recuperation, reduces joint pain and inflammation, overcomes food intolerances, heals and seals a leaky gut, inhibits infections and promotes growth of healthy bones, teeth and hair. It can be made from any type of meat or poultry by simmering slowly for a long time with a splash of vinegar to draw out the minerals and nutrients from the bones and connective tissues.



BEEF BROTH Any bones can be used, but large joint bones with cartilage and connective tissue will yield the most healing nutrients. Place bones in deep pot, cover with water, add a tablespoon or more of apple cider vinegar and barely simmer for up to 24 hours. Remove bones, skim and strain. Broth will last up to a week in the fridge or you can freeze in jars or ice cube trays.

CHICKEN BROTH Any parts will work, necks, wings, backs or even the whole chicken. Place in deep pot or slow cooker with water to cover and add a tablespoon of apple cider vinegar. Cover and heat to a slow simmer for up to 12 hours. When cool, skim fat off and strain mixture to remove bones. Meat can be reserved or fed along with

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LIGHTLY COOKED ONE POT DINNER

(40% meat, 40% noble grains, 20% veg.)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup quick oatmeal or quinoa
- 2 cups (one lb.) ground meat (beef, lamb, chicken, turkey, etc.)
- 1/2 to 1 cup ground raw vegetables or rehydrated Veg-to-Bowl

DIRECTIONS

1. Add oats or quinoa to 2 cups salted boiling water, and cook until soft. Remove from heat.
2. While oatmeal or quinoa is still hot, stir in meat. Heat should lightly cook it.
3. Stir in vegetables when mixture cools to lukewarm. Salt to taste if desired.

Proportions of meat and grain can be adjusted to meet the needs of your dog.



THE CLASSIC DOG RECIPE (daily fare for a 50 lb. dog)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 cups (1 1/4 lb) ground raw meaty bones (chicken backs, turkey necks, duck necks, etc) OR 2 cups muscle meat (1 lb) preferably with organ meats
- 2Tb seaweed calcium
- 1/2 cup ground raw green & orange vegetables OR 1/2 cup rehydrated Dr. Harvey's Veg-to-Bowl
- Optional: 1 clove fresh garlic, 1" cube fresh ginger - grind with vegetables
- Optional: 1 raw egg - Add last, mix in well. If you like, mash up shell and include for more minerals.



DIRECTIONS

Use a food processor to finely grind all veggies together, or put through a juicer, and use both juice and pulp. If using Dr. Harvey's there is no need to grind it. Mix ingredients together for a consistency like thick chili. Add water if too dry. Multiply quantities to make a big batch. Keep in fridge up to 3 days or freeze in portions.

RECOMMENDED SUPPLEMENTS

1/2 to 1Tb Essential fatty acid sources-Nordic Naturals Fish Oil or Animal Essentials EFA capsules
Vitamin mix: Natures Logic Food Fortifier, Missing Link, or Animal Essentials Herbal Multi-Vitamin

ONE WHOLE STEWED CHICKEN FOR DOGS

INGREDIENTS

- One whole chicken with giblets, approx 3.5 lbs
- 1 1/2 cups brown rice, uncooked
- 4 cups sliced mixed veggies - comb. of carrots, yams, celery, parsley, kale, squash, zucchini, other greens
- 4 -10 garlic cloves, chopped

DIRECTIONS

1. Remove giblets and set aside. Using a large knife or poultry shears, cut chicken in half or quarters.
 2. Cover with water in large pot, add rice and simmer gently for 90 minutes until rice is soft and chicken is falling from the bones.
 3. Add vegetables and garlic and simmer for 45 minutes until vegetables are soft.
 4. Cool. Remove chicken, coarsely cut up meat and skin, pick out large bones.
 5. Save neck, liver and gizzard to feed raw, or sauté liver and gizzard lightly and serve as a special treat. Meals are approximately 50% meat, 25% brown rice and 25% vegetables. This stew will last for many meals, and you can freeze some in portions for future use.
- Just before serving each meal, add digestive enzymes, essential fatty acid supplement, kelp and calcium supplement (unless you feed meaty bones several times a week). This recipe can be made in a slow cooker.

