



Raw Feeding Made Simple

What is the Goal?

The goal is to feed your carnivorous companion animal as close to nature's recipe for good health as possible. If left to fend for themselves, our pets would eat a balance of the essential amino acids, vitamins and minerals they need for optimal health. To achieve this for them we strive to create the diet that our pets would instinctively eat if given the opportunity.

"Matching your pet's diet as closely as possible to their ancestral diet is essential if you want a healthy, thriving cat or dog." Dr. Karen Becker

It helps to understand the basics of raw feeding. Once you feed your pet raw meals for a few weeks, you will get into a routine and it will become second nature.

Supplying your pet with good nutrition is as easy as feeding yourself.

Basic Raw Food Diet Guidelines:

- Switching to Raw Diet – Transition your pet's diet in a sensible manner: First, discontinue all dry food (kibble) and eliminate all grains and starches. Get your pet accustomed to a high protein diet (quality canned or home cooked). Supporting your pet's digestive track with probiotics during the transition to raw food may also be beneficial.
- Quality Meat Sources – Select only reputable sources: USDA or State Inspected livestock and free-range for added nutrient benefit. No additives (e.g. flavoring, tenderizers, preservatives), only 100% natural. *Carnivores* human-grade meats are inspected and all natural.
- Variety – Offer as many different meats, poultries and fish sources as possible. Include organ meats and bone (Calcium source) in meals. Rotate the different foods in the weekly rations. *Carnivores* ground *whole-prey* products contain meat, organ and bone in a wide variety of meats sources.
- Calcium to Phosphorus Ratio – Keep Calcium intake higher than Phosphorus intake in the overall diet. 1.1:1 to 1.4:1 is said to be a good range. It is our belief that *whole-prey is naturally balanced*.
- Essential Fatty Acids – Balance the Omega 3's and 6's. Provide Omega 3's regularly.

- Clean Water – Provide plenty of fresh (non-chlorinated, non-fluorinated) water. Always change the water after your pet drinks after eating its raw meal.
- Food Temperature – Feed raw food at room temperature. Closer to nature, more appetizing, and we feel it is more easily digestible.
- Food Safety – Use the same precautions when handling raw meat and poultry as you would when preparing your own meals. Also, wash your hands after handling frozen raw food packaging.
- Food Bowl – No plastic or ceramic. Use a non-lead glass or stainless steel bowl to assure complete cleaning.
- Pet Safety – Monitor your pet at all times when they are enjoying a meaty bone, knuckle bone, whole meat parts, bully stick or other chew treat.
- Cleanliness – Keep two different colored sponges at your sink; one for your dishes and one for your pet's dishes. Clean pet food dish with soapy warm water immediately after feeding. Use a damp paper towel to wipe your pet's face after its raw meal. Do not use soap or antibacterial wipes on your pet's muzzle.
- Weight – Keep an eye on weight loss or gain and make appropriate adjustments in food quantity. Most average activity adult pets will maintain weight with daily rations of 1.5% to 2.5% of body weight.
- Give up the "Complete Meal" Concept – There is not a person on this planet that knows exactly what complete nutrition really is, for pets or humans. Think about the way you eat. Do you add up all the nutrients in everything you put in your mouth to be certain that you are always getting the exact amount of each vitamin and mineral you may need with every meal? Of course not!

The key to good nutrition for any species is eating a broad variety of biologically appropriate foods in appropriate quantities. The best source of amino acids, vitamins, and minerals comes from the whole foods we ingest. This is also true for our pets.

Give your pet a fresh wholesome diet of raw meat with fat, bone, organ meat, tripe, eggs, fish, and if you wish, a little pulped select vegetables. Everything about them – coat, weight, energy, health and overall well being – will quickly show you this good nutrition is working for them.

*"In all the controversies over what the causes of diversities might be, no one seems to have paid much attention to the factor in the environment that has the most obvious effect on any organism: food." Michael Crawford & David Marsh, *The Driving Force: Food in Evolution and the Future**

Basic Ingredients for a Wholesome RAW Diet:

A raw whole-prey diet is intended to mimic the approximate percentage of meat, organ and bone that the wild carnivore eats. *Suggested percentages are guidelines and based solely on our research and years of experience.*

- **Muscle Meat with Fat** (approximately 80% of daily rations)
 - Red meats: beef, duck, lamb, buffalo, venison, mutton, and gullet
 - White meats: poultry, rabbit, pork, and goat
 - Fish: salmon, mackerel, sardines, tuna and white fish
 - Heart and Tripe (also referred to as organ meats)Meat provides essential amino acids, vitamins and minerals, and fish also supplies essential Omega 3 fatty acids.
- **Organ Meat** (approximately 10% of daily rations - of which most should be liver and heart). Heart (also known as a muscle meat), liver, gizzards, lungs, kidneys, pancreas, and spleen. Organ meat provides additional essential amino acids and important vitamins, as well as major minerals and trace minerals like Iron, Copper, Zinc, Selenium, and Manganese. The heart in particular, is a good source of Taurine.
- **Edible Bones** (7% to 13% of daily rations as tolerated). Edible RAW bones only. Never feed cooked bones. **Our *Carnivores* brand ground whole-prey products have the bone ground in with the muscle meat and organs.** Dogs and Cats do not chew like we do; they will generally chump down once or twice and swallow. Edible-bones are those that are easy for our pets to crush. What edible bones are appropriate can also depend on the animal's size, dental and digestive health, and if they have a tendency, as many do, to gulp their food. You want to be sure they can easily swallow the pieces without choking. **The general rule is that bones fed whole should be plenty large enough that your dog cannot gulp them down in whole large pieces or small enough that they can easily swallow the piece. With our large dogs, who are gulpers, we feel more comfortable with the bone ground in the meat (i.e. *Carnivores* ground whole-prey) and a weekly snack of *cut up* poultry necks for their crunching pleasure.** Edible bones provide minerals, especially Calcium.
- **Tripe** (15% to 18% of overall diet). Some feed as much as 1/3 of the diet in Tripe. We feed Tripe two meals a week. Tripe is the hooved animal's stomach (considered a muscle and an organ). ***Carnivores* Tripe** is green -unbleached and free of denature ingredients. Tripe provides a great low ash protein with many amino acids, probiotics, and an abundance of enzymes.

"To argue whether raw food diets are appropriate for dogs and cats is moot; they have thrived consuming a variety of small pray for thousands of years!" The healthytruth.net

- **Eggs** – (once a week, *the white and the yolk*). Eggs are known as the ‘gold standard’ of protein quality. The most beneficial eggs are cage free and locally farmed - preferably organic. These are more nutritious and higher in the essential Omega 3 fatty acids. Eggs can be fed raw or cooked, but raw supplies better nutrition, including unadulterated Omega 3 fatty acids. Egg whites contain a protein “avidin.” This protein depletes the B vitamin Biotin. Biotin is essential for growth and coat. Egg yolks, however, are high in Biotin. Research indicates Biotin deficiency becomes a concern only when one is eating egg whites without the yolk on a daily basis. Organ meat can also be added to eggs for additional Biotin.
- **Necks** – (Up to 10% of overall diet, as tolerated). *We feed our English Mastiffs Carnivores **Chicken and Duck** Necks* as a snack 2-3 times a week. Many large dogs tend to gulp their food. For them, we find whole necks are best served dried off (with paper towel) and cut up in three to seven pieces depending on neck size. We have found the larger dog will be more apt to chump down once or twice before swallowing on the cut, dry pieces of neck. A good pair of bone cutting scissors easily cuts through poultry necks. Smaller dogs and cats tend to chew off appropriate-sized small portions of the neck. Dogs and cats love the crunchy pleasure of raw necks, but they can also be served ground. We offer OMA’s brand ground necks for those who prefer this type.
- **Vegetables and Fruits** – (Vegetables for dogs: optional- at approximately 1.5% of diet). *Select* pureed vegetables in minimal quantity for dogs. We feed our dogs 1 Tbsp of pureed vegetables per pound and a half of ground raw meat-organ-bone in *one* of their two daily meals, usually 4 to 5 days a week. Many nutritionists say that *fruits are best served separately from food*. Select fruit can make a good addition to homemade treats or pureed, then frozen and served as an ice pop, but some fruits are **poisonous to our pets**. Fruits are also high in fructose (sugar). Therefore, if you offer fruits do so selectively, minimally and infrequently. It is said that cats do not metabolize plant-based foods. If you choose to offer them to your cat, it is our understanding to do so in very minimal amount, pureed. [See Links Below](#)
- **Recreational Bones** – (Several times a week for 10 to 30 minutes depending on chew aggression and tolerance/stool hardness). Knuckle bone or meaty knuckle bone. Cleans the teeth, stimulates the gums and strengthens the jaw and neck muscles. The action of grinding and chewing also gets their natural gastric juices flowing. In addition, the positive psychological benefit is a plus!
- **Calcium – Balancing the Calcium to Phosphorus Ratio:** Meats are much higher in Phosphorus than Calcium. It is important to keep this ratio in balance. When feeding raw *boneless* meats you should supply Calcium. Eggs are also slightly higher in Phosphorus, so a little Calcium should be added to an egg meal. See below and **Balancing the Calcium to Phosphorus Ratio** and our **Eggnog Recipe**

- **Omega 3 Fatty Acids** – Sources: fish, especially sardines and the deep water fish like salmon and mackerel. A daily Omega 3 supplement is also advised. We prefer **Krill Oil**. See **Balancing Omega 3's and 6's below**
- **Taurine** – Essential for cats. Cats cannot produce the amino acid Taurine. It must be consumed in their food. Taurine is supplied in meats and especially hearts and mouse. However, we recommend supplementing your cat's raw diet with Taurine. *Dogs that are prone to Cardiomyopathy* may also benefit from added Taurine in their diet. See **Taurine below**

"Animals require the enzymes, amino acids and other nutrients in the raw meat in order to stay healthy. Animals need at least 30% raw animal fat, and their systems are not designed to handle cooked meat or cooked fat... For a return to health your pet requires a diet which strengthens the immune system and most closely resembles that which they would get in the wild. It's really easy to do, feed your pet a combination of raw meats and select from a host of raw vegetables..." Karen Becker, DVM

Carbohydrates and Fiber: Do Our Pets Need Them?

There is no minimal carbohydrate requirement for our carnivorous companion animals. When we first started feeding our pets a raw diet, my omnivorous thinking had me believing they had to have carbohydrates for fuel/energy to maintain their bodies. We quickly learned that our carnivorous kids do not obtain their energy from carbohydrates. We also learned that it is not the carbohydrates per se that maintains organ health or the nervous and immune system; it is actually glucose. But, if not from carbohydrates, where then do our pets get adequate amounts of glucose? They obtain them from food sources that are bio-available to their carnivorous systems; they get it from protein and fat. An excellent paper on this subject is offered by Carissa Kuehn

<http://www.rawfed.com/myths/carbs.html>

"There is no minimal dietary carbohydrate requirement for either the dog or the cat. Based on investigations in the dog and with other species it is likely that dogs and cats can be maintained without carbohydrates if the diet supplies enough fat or protein from which metabolic requirement for glucose is derived." Waltham Book of Dog and Cat Nutrition (2nd edition, 1988)

Grains and Starches:

According to Lewis Olson, PhD, Natural Health of B-Naturals.com "...*the starches and grains slow down the digestive process for dogs and can cause irritation and spasms in the large intestine... Starches pose another problem in canine digestion. Most grains contain phytin, which inhibits the absorption of Calcium, Magnesium, Iron, Zinc and also Iodine.*" This statement holds true for the obligate (strict) carnivore cat as well.

Experience has taught us that carbohydrate intake causes more harm than good for our dogs and cats. Aside from confusing their digestive system, we believe that the carbohydrates found in grains, starches (e.g. rice, potatoes, oats, lentils), and starchy vegetables (e.g. most squash, beets, peas, etc.) may be too high in glucose, and deliver glucose too fast for the carnivore. Excess glucose can also cause an array of health issues.

“Avoid giving your carnivorous companions biologically inappropriate foods, including grains, such as oats, soy, millet, wheat, or rice. Dogs and cats do not have a carbohydrate requirement and feeding your pets these pro-inflammatory foods creates unnecessary metabolic roadblocks to health.”
Dr. Karen Becker

Vegetables and Fruits:

Should you feed your pet produce? This question is debated by many. Wolves and feral dogs will by chance consume a minimal amount of plant matter from the stomach of the *small* prey animals they consume and their survival instincts may compel them to eat select berries, grasses, and bugs. **These observations do not, however, make the carnivore dog an omnivore.** The cat is more finicky and cunning; they are obligate (strict) carnivores. See **Dogs and Cats are Carnivores.**

Research confirms that cats are not fully capable of digesting fiber or plant matter. Dogs are not designed to eat fiber or plant matter either and can likely survive without them. In fact, some raw feeders do not offer any plant matter to their pets.

Most commercial pet foods contain over 60% nutrient-empty fiber-fillers. The fiber requirement for dogs is only 1% to 3% of their diet. Meat contains a small amount of fiber and in the wild a wolf will also incidentally consume a small amount of the prey animal's fur, which may serve as a bit of fiber. We feel if fed properly *a small amount of select vegetables and fruit* can serve as this minimal fiber requirement while supplying additional

“The digestive anatomy of the dog is that of a simple carnivore system that normally does not require more than 1-3% dietary fiber in order to function at peak performance. Adding fiber (a non-nutritious substance) to the dog's diet does little more than add cheap bulk and may potentially cause diarrhea.” William Barnett, DVM

whole-food sources of vitamins and minerals for our dogs. Since the carnivore does not digest plant matter very well, you must puree the plant matter in a food processor to aid in digestion. Avoid starchy vegetables and too much fruit.

There are two ways to supply vegetables to your dog's diet.

- 1- Puree a variety of suitable vegetables daily in a small food processor
- 2- Puree a large batch and freeze it in glass containers; defrost as needed

We have found making a large batch of Veggie Puree and freezing it the most convenient method and it allows us to use select produce and the minimal quantity we feel is appropriate for our pets. Our plans include making our Veggie Puree available for purchase soon. In the meantime, we are happy to provide you with our recipe. **Veggie Puree Recipe**

Calcium to Phosphorus Ratio: Overview

Please see **Balancing the Calcium to Phosphorus Ratio**. This paper covers a more in-depth review of the following:

In humans and animals Calcium to Phosphorus balance is essential to the development and maintenance of a strong and healthy skeletal structure. If a living creature is not getting enough Calcium in its diet, its body will seek to obtain it from within - from its bone mass. Too much Calcium on the other hand can also cause health issues.

It is important to have more Calcium than Phosphorus in the overall diet, and meat without bone is higher in Phosphorus than Calcium. Eggs are also slightly higher in Phosphorus than Calcium.

There are three ways people who feed their pets a raw diet accomplish a balance of Calcium to Phosphorus when feeding *boneless* meats or eggs:

1. mixing the boneless meats with ground frames (carcass with meat removed). *Our preference because it is the most natural form of Calcium.*
2. adding ground eggshell. Calcium Carbonate – *an antacid. Highly acidic stomach acids allow our pets to safely digest raw meat. Calcium Carbonate reduces stomach acid.* We suggest eggshell with cooked eggs or occasional cooked boneless meats only. *Pure Bone Meal Calcium is the safer choice for raw boneless meats and raw eggs.*
3. adding any other Calcium supplement. *Least favorable because supplements may contain other ingredients that dogs and cats are sensitive to.*

It is said by many experts that the optimal balance is a ration of 1.1:1 – the Calcium slightly higher than the Phosphorus. Others claim that for the carnivore the Calcium to Phosphorus ratio can be as high as 2:1- twice as much Calcium than Phosphorus. Bone is the most natural source of Calcium for our carnivorous pets.

Feeding your pet *only* boneless meats would cause an unhealthy imbalance in the very important Calcium to Phosphorus nutrient ratio. We feel feeding your pet *Carnivores* ground whole-prey products supplies *nature's idea of balance*, including Calcium and Phosphorus. See *Nutrient Composition of Whole Vertebrate Prey* below

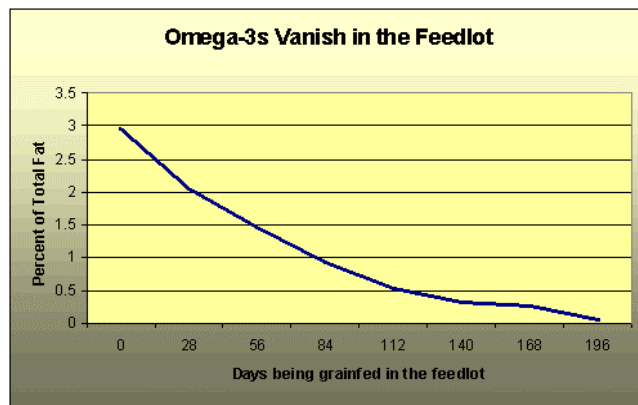
Essential Fatty Acids:

The importance of balancing Omega 3's and Omega 6's

Fatty acids or polyunsaturated fats such as Omega 3 and Omega 6 cannot be manufactured by the body and therefore must be consumed in the diet.

Nature intended for ruminates (cud-chewing four hooved mammals, like cows and lambs) to eat green grasses and for birds (i.e. chickens and turkeys) to eat primarily insects, grasses and a little fruit and grain. Sixty percent of the fatty acids in grass are Omega 3's. Meats from free-range animals have 3 to 5 times (and some experts say up to 7 times) more Omega 3's than those that are confined and fed grains. 100% grass-fed meats and open farm-raised poultry are naturally well balanced in Omega 3 and Omega 6 fatty acids.

For the sake of efficiency the meat/poultry industry has commercialized into feedlot practices. In feedlots, these animals are confined or caged and fed a biologically inappropriate diet of primarily grains. Grains are very high in Omega 6 fatty acids. The high grain diet causes a serious imbalance in Omega 3 and Omega 6 essential fatty acids. Feedlot-raised animals are high in Omega 6's and low in Omega 3's. This graph indicates how Omega 3's diminish rapidly in grain fed livestock. Eggs from all- grain fed chickens are also unnaturally low in Omega 3's.



Data from: J Animal Sci (1993) 71(8):2079-88

Although Omega 6's are essential and good, we are getting far too much of a good thing! The store bought feedlot meats and poultry we and our pets consume do not have a healthy balance of these essential fatty acids. The following reflects just how far off this balance is:

<u>Raw Boneless Meat</u> (16 oz.) Feedlot Source	<u>Omega 6</u>	<u>Omega 3</u>
Beef Chuck (best guess)	1927mg	276mg.
Chicken Breast (verified)	7821mg	174mg.

Experts suggest 1:1 to 5:1 as an average – equal to double the Omega 6 to Omega 3 being sited for optimal health. If you and your pet are eating primarily processed oils, grains, and feedlot meats/poultry from the grocery store, you are likely deficient in Omega 3 fatty acids. Pets fed a high grain diet are especially at risk. Processed pet foods that contain added Omega 3's provide little benefit as this fragile fatty acid has been adulterated in the cooking process and may not have come from a reliable mercury and PBC free source.

High Omega 6's lead to inflammation in the body and a deficiency in Omega 3's is associated with over 40 afflictions including aging, allergies, arthritis, atopy dermatitis, auto-immune disorder, cancer, heart disease, fatty liver, kidney

disease, cardiovascular disorder, ligament injuries, vision disorders, immune deficiency and stroke.

The Grateful Pet's *Carnivores* line sources ruminant animals that are free-range and primarily grass-fed, but they are supplemented with hay and grain in the cold winter months. Our poultry is also cage free, but they are fed grains. We are confident **our meats and possibly our poultry are higher in Omega 3 than feedlot meats and poultry, but the balance of Omega 3 and 6 is so essential to health we recommend supplementing daily with Omega 3.**

The best sources of Omega 3 fatty acids for our pets are krill and cold-water fatty fish like Sardines, Salmon, Mackerel, Herring, and Albacore Tuna. Offer your pet a variety of these Omega 3 rich foods (raw - from a reliable source or cooked/canned) as a snack twice a week and give them a Krill Oil or quality fish oil supplement (sardine, mackerel, salmon are the best fish oil sources) on a daily basis.

Cod Liver oil is not recommended because of its high Vitamin D and A content. Flaxseed is a source of Omega 3, but also contains Omega 6's and is not appropriate for the carnivore. Flaxseed contains an inactive form of the Omega 3 ALA. Our carnivorous pets do not have the enzymes required to convert the inactive ALA into an active form. **Our pets are not able to convert/process Flaxseed** and most flaxseed oils are processed with a chemical that many pets are sensitive to. Unfortunately, flaxseed is found in many processed pet foods. **NOTE: Omega 9 fatty acids offer no benefit to your pet's health** and in fact, experts agree that too much Omega 9 actually decreases the concentrations of Omega 3 and Omega 6 in the blood and skin.

Taurine: Essential for Cats.

Cats cannot produce the amino acid Taurine. It must be consumed in their food. Meats provide some Taurine and mouse is especially high in Taurine. Also, hearts (all sources) supply a significant amount of Taurine so including them as a staple in you cat's diet is beneficial. However, Taurine may diminish



slightly in the freezing process. Because Taurine is so essential to a cat's health and it cannot be overdone, we supplement about 150 mg per day depending on how much mouse our cat consumed that day or if it ate a few hearts.

"For most cats, I find 75-100 mg of Taurine per day is about right, although some cats, I have seen this number climb close to 300 mg per day. Taurine is not stored by cats and would be very difficult to overdose... With Taurine and cats, a little excess is definitely preferable to not quite enough." Tracy Lord, DVM

In addition, *dogs that are prone to Cardiomyopathy* will also benefit from a little extra heart in their weekly diet. Dogs, if they like it, can also be fed mouse.

See JAVMA **Taurine deficiency in Newfoundlands on Complete and Balanced Commercial Diets**

Bare Bones Insight – About *Raw* Bones for Chewing Enjoyment and Benefit

Dogs and cats need to chew, tear, rip, and grind. It is a natural instinct and those given the opportunity are very happy pups/kitties with great attitudes, strong upper body mass and excellent dental health! See **Bones**

We find our dogs asking for their raw bone to chew on right after they eat. They instinctively know that this natural behavior also gets their gastric juices flowing. If you don't have a raw bone readily defrosted, a **Bully Stick** is a good alternative chewing source.

Beef or Buffalo Knuckle Bones - recreational bones are for our pet's psychological pleasure and to strengthen the neck and jaw muscles, and naturally keep their teeth and gums in good health. Knuckle bones are hard but not brittle. The animal will usually gnaw at the knuckle with its back molars sawing off small shavings at a time.

Marrow/Femur Bones - (also known as a soup bone) are very hard and even in their raw state, brittle. If they have been dropped in transit or your pet is an aggressive chewer they can splinter. Marrow bones are another good treat for your pet's psychological pleasure and health benefit. We allow our English Mastiffs to rip off the grizzle from the long, uncut soup bone and lick the marrow out of the center of the bone. They are **BIG dogs with powerful jaws and very aggressive chewers**, so we **do not allow them to chew on a Marrow/femur (soup) bone**. Smaller dogs are generally less aggressive chewers and can usually safely enjoy chewing on a soup bone.

Meaty Bones - are either the Knuckle bone with a substantial amount of meat and fat or a cut Marrow-femur bone with a 3" to 4" circumference of meat left on the bone. These make a good boneless meat meal for the smaller pet or a welcome snack for the bigger breeds. Calcium should be supplemented if feeding the non-edible Marrow/femur cut meaty bone frequently as a boneless meat meal.

If your dog has severe gingivitis and/or decayed teeth it is not recommended they be fed raw bones to chew on until this condition is improved. A Meaty bone could be offered for ripping and tearing enjoyment, but caution should be taken with bones if your pet has poor dental health. **All pets should be monitored when enjoying a raw bone.**

Your Pet's Stool is a Good Guild:

Your pet's stool will be less in volume, less frequent, and more consistent. This is because your pet is now absorbing the nutrients in their food verses passing them through without much benefit. Their stool will be naturally firm and dry out within a short period of time. Stool should be firm but not

uncomfortably hard. If stool is unusually soft, feed less Vegetable Puree or you may be feeding too much organ meat at one time. If stool is uncomfortably hard add a little more organ meat or some Veggie Puree or back off on the Knuckle bones, necks, or high-bone content grinds (i.e carcasses with little meat). Watch your pet's bowel movements and make adjustments accordingly.

Feeding a *small* amount of "pure" canned pumpkin can also help with either diarrhea or constipation. Do not use pumpkin pie-filling as it contains sugar and spice. If needed, most dogs and cats like a little pumpkin as a treat.

The Proof is in Their Good Health!

I can assure you; once you go raw you'll never go back!



Pets fed a balanced raw diet are naturally healthier...

The value of not having to suffer through illnesses with them is beyond words. The time and money saved is an added benefit!

THE DONT'S OF RAW FEEDING:

Most of these are common sense measures, but worth mentioning

NEVER feed cooked bones - this cannot be stressed enough. It is dangerous to do so.

NEVER leave pet unattended with any Bone or Chew

Do not ignore the importance of including Omega 3 fatty acids in the diet

Do not ignore the need to provided Taurine to your cat's daily diet

Do not feed only boneless meats - Too high in Phosphorus, must include a Calcium source; preferably biologically appropriate animal bone

Avoid using Ground Eggshell (Calcium Carbonate) in raw boneless meat meals. Calcium Carbonate reduces the highly acidic gastric juices our dogs and cats need to safely consume raw animal protein and raw eggs

Keep bone consumption at an average of 13% of the overall diet. In our opinion, it is best not to exceed 16% on a regular basis. Let your dog's stool be the guide. Stools should be firm, but not uncomfortably hard.

Avoid grains, starches, and starchy vegetables – These are not necessary and they do more harm than any possible good. Including grain or starch-based foods in your dog's overall diet can confuse their digestive system and bog down its natural ability to assimilate raw animal protein. Giving your dog a small amount of treats that contain rice, potato, quinoa, or other grain is okay, but separate from the raw food meal time. Do not feed cats any grains.

NEVER mix dry food (kibble) or grains with raw food – Carnivores are designed to move the raw animal protein through their system rapidly. Mixing kibble or grains with raw meat causes the raw meat to stay in the digestive tract much too long. This usually causes digestive upset, including diarrhea, and an inability for the carnivore to absorb the nutrients it needs from the appropriate animal protein source. It is our belief starches and starchy vegetables (potatoes, yams, yucca, peas, etc.) can create these same problems for the carnivore.

We have found that even feeding foods of this nature separate from raw food (in a different meal) tends to confuse the carnivores digestive system. The only starches/grains our dogs eat are in an occasional treat form and in minimal quantity apart from raw food.

Don't over-feed organ meats – (liver, heart, gullet, pancreas, lungs, and kidneys) Organ meats are a wonderful source of amino acids and natural vitamin and minerals. However, organ meats are high in Phosphorus and Iron; necessary minerals, but in adequate, not overdone quantity. Too much organ meat in the overall diet can throw off the Calcium to Phosphorus ratio and too much at one time can cause loose stools. We feed primarily *Carnivores* whole-prey which contains some organ meat. We also add organ meat to boneless meat meals (approximately 2 oz. organ meat to 16 oz. or 1 lb. of meat) and to raw eggnog twice a week (about a 1 1/2 tsp. of organ meat per egg). On another note: if your dog is constipated, a little extra organ meat can help to loosen stool and encourage a bowel movement.

Do not feed meats that contain tenderizers, flavoring or preservatives – Many grocery stores carry brands of meats, (especially poultry), that have been injected with up to 12% artificial ingredients. These additives cause many pets to experience allergic reactions such as itching and chewing.

Best to feed more than once a day – Some nutritionists say this allows for better nutrient uptake. We agree with this philosophy.

Do not feed spoiled produce – Use only fresh produce and if the refrigerated Veggie Puree turns a yellowish color before you use it up, discard it.

NEVER use meats that are questionable – If you think they have been in the refrigerator or out too long they probably were. If you wouldn't eat it yourself, do not feed it to your furry loved one.

Raw Eggs good, but not everyday – Raw egg whites contain Avidin, a biotin-binding protein. Egg yolks are high in Biotin. There remains controversy about *daily raw egg white* consumption and Biotin deficiency. Wolves love raw eggs, but they don't just eat the whites and they don't consume eggs every day. A once a week raw egg feeding adds beneficial nutrition and great Omega 3 fatty acids to the diet. We add a spoonful of organ meat to the raw egg meal to increase the Biotin even more.

Do not feed frozen or icy cold raw meat-bone-organs – Raw food is best served at or near room-temperature. [See Food Preparation Tips below.](#)

Defrosted meats stay good in the refrigerator for about 2 to 3 days after fully defrosted.

Do not cook or microwave the *Carnivores* whole-prey meat-bone-organ products or any product containing bone or cartilage.

Do not use plastic or ceramic bowls for raw feeding. It is impossible to clean them thoroughly.

Do not leave raw food out for longer than 20 minutes. If your dog does not want to eat at that time, place the left-over raw food in a freezer baggie and store it in the refrigerator to offer later or for the next meal.

It is not a good practice to refreeze *fully* defrosted meats – It is said the nutrients are damaged when you do this and the food will not last as long in the freezer. [See Food Preparation Tips below.](#)

Do not under-feed – Average adult pets require approximately 1.5% to 2.5% of their body weight in raw food a day. Kittens, puppies and pregnant or nursing females need much more food. They can eat up to 5% to 8% or more of their body weight daily, and should be fed at least 3 to 4 times a day. (Once weaned - up to three months: feed four times a day. Months four through six: feed three times a day.)

http://www.pethealth101.com/nutrition/feeding_puppies_kittens.shtml

The following points are recommended with raw or processed food:

Do not allow your pet to wipe its face on furniture or bedding after he/she eats. Clean its muzzle with a wet, then a dry paper towel. Do not use soap or antibacterial wipes on your dog's muzzle.

Keep children away from raw food and unclean food bowl.

Do not immediately allow your pet to lick yours or a child's mouth just after eating a raw meal. This is true with *any* pet food. In fact, dry pet food (kibble) is the worst for containing food borne bacteria.

Do not leave out a water bowl that has remnants of pet food in it. Clean the bowl and put out fresh water.

Food Preparation Tips:

Portion primary meals (i.e. meat-organ-bone) into appropriate serving sizes and store in freezer in food-safe freezer baggies.

Portion the beneficial extras (i.e. organ meats, chicken feet, gullet, pancreas, and necks) into appropriate size servings to also store in freezer. We package the serving into pint freezer baggies and then put the pint freezer bags in a gallon freezer bag labeled appropriately. This practice makes it easy for us to offer these beneficial foods to our pets on a regular basis.

Tips for portioning out smaller portions of primary meals and extras (i.e. serving sizes needed that are less than the package size purchased): defrost package in the refrigerator for about an hour or place in cold water bath for about 10 minutes. The meat will still be frozen solid, but will be just soft enough for you to cut through into appropriate serving size portions. Using a heavy serrated knife; cut into serving size portions appropriate for your pet's meal or snack. Place portion in food safe freezer baggies and immediately place back in the freezer. Poultry necks will also pull apart using this approach, but will still be frozen. If necessary for your pet's size, you can cut the necks into appropriate bite-size pieces (with bone cutting scissors) at this time and package ready to defrost and serve, or portion out whole necks into appropriate serving size and wait to cut them up at time of serving.

Advanced defrosting: Place the next meal or two in the refrigerator to defrost when you prepare your pet's meal.

When readying a meal, put the raw food package in a food safe freezer baggie and place the bag in a container of room temperature water. Refresh with room temperature water as the water becomes ice cold. Grasp the outer package in your hand to feel temperature of bag contents. When room temperature is achieved, remove from package and serve. Be sure to discard the metal or plastic crimped closure found at the top of the *Carnivores* raw food package.

Handy Utensils and Supplies

Heavy serrated knife – cutting still mostly frozen meats

Bone cutting scissors – to cut up poultry necks

Kitchen weight scale – weighing out appropriate serving portions

Water bath container – for soaking the raw food package in water: to defrost enough to cut up in meal/snack size portions and to bring raw food to room temperature just before feeding. A standard refrigerator/freezer plastic ice container works well.

Food processor

Food chopper

Vegetable brush

Food safe plastic freezer baggies – these can be re-used by washing them out several times with hot soapy water. Consider Mother Earth!

Coffee grinder specifically for grinding eggshell for a Calcium source if you feed *cooked* boneless meats or *cooked* eggs

A different color sponge for cleaning pet's food and water dishes

Transitioning Your Pet to a Raw Food Diet: Overview

See **Full Report for Suggested Instructions**. This paper covers a more in-depth review of the following:

With introducing anything new to your pet:

Rule # 1 - every pet is different and you know your pet best

Rule # 2 - it is usually best to go slow! Make the change gradually

Rule # 3 - observe your pet. Pay attention to his or her overall well being

Do not go from processed pet food to prey - it's too big a leap!

Do not convert by adding raw food to dry food (kibble) or any grain or starch-based food

First transition your pet from dry kibble or a grain/starch-based food to a cooked protein diet

Support your pet's digestive function from start to finish of the transition with raw Pancreas and Tripe. If your pet's digestive health is compromised, probiotics may also aid in the transition

Once you have transitioned your pet to a completely no kibble, no grain, no starch diet you have two choices:

1. make the switch immediately to a *ground* raw animal protein meal; or
2. make the transition gradually to ground raw protein over a period of 10 to 12 days (our preference)

To introduce raw meat and raw bone meals we recommend starting out with bones that are ground into the meats like our *Carnivores* ground whole-prey products. Start with one meat source for the first few days and then begin to offer variety.

Most dogs are eager to eat the raw food. They are usually very excited about being offered real food with active nutrients and living enzymes. Cats on the other hand are sometimes more difficult to convert to a raw diet. **It is *important* that a cat does not go without eating for any length of time.**

Cats do not have a lot of body mass and it can cause serious health issues for a cat to lose weight rapidly. [See Link below.](#)

Pay attention to your animal companion's health: weight, energy level, skin condition, odor, coat quality, stool consistency and frequency, and oral health.

See **Transitioning Your Pet to Raw Food** for more complete suggested instructions.

"...the dog is a meat eater, from teeth fashioned for tearing and crushing, the powerful jawbones and muscles, the small, very muscular stomach, the short intestines (to avoid putrefaction of flesh foods), and above all, the very powerful digestive juices peculiar to the carnivorous animals – digestive juices that can dissolve even lumps of bone. In health, the dog's juices, both of mouth and stomach, are strongly antiseptic." Juliette de Bairacli Levy, *The Complete Herbal Book for the Dog, a Handbook of Natural Care and Rearing*



Hooch waiting for his wholesome raw meal ... YUM!

Links for Your Further Reference

An excellent work by Carissa Kuehn: Carissa holds a BS degree in Zoology and Biology with concentration in Anatomy and Physiology. Here she shares years of research on her *Myths About Raw Feeding* Pages. <http://rawfed.com/myths/>

What You Need To Know About Dog and Cat Nutrition, by Kymythy R. Schultze, Clinical Nutritionist and Animal Health Instructor
<http://www.kymythy.com/articles03.html>

Feline Nutrition Education Society <http://feline-nutrition.org/nutrition>

Diet guide for domestic dogs and cats, by Tom Lonsdale, Veterinary Surgeon
<http://www.rawmeatybones.com/diet/exp-diet-guide.pdf>

Nutrient Composition Of Whole Vertebrate Prey (excluding fish) Fed In Zoos, by E. Dierenfeld, PhD, H. Alcorn, BS, and K. Jacobsen, MS.
See pages 12 and 13 for mineral content of whole-prey.
<http://www.nal.usda.gov/awic/zoo/WholePreyFinal02May29.pdf>

"With Taurine and cats, a little excess is definitely preferable to not quite enough." Tracy Lord, DVM
<http://www.vetlord.org/taurine-is-essential-for-cats/>

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