

The **bow & wow**®
Issue No.19
TIMES



Food & Health Connection

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Food and Health Connection

I walk into my veterinarian's office one afternoon and see a frail-looking Labrador with big, red lesions around his mouth. I soon find out that the beautiful 3-year-old dog is suffering from cancer. The Big C! Bewildered, I ask my veterinarian how and why. He tells me that dogs get cancer the same ways people do: through genetic causes, environmental factors, age-related cell decline, and worst of all, seemingly at random. According to him, they are getting more and more cancer cases in the recent years. When I did some quick research I find out that, similar to human cancer, pet cancer is one of the leading causes of pet deaths, especially for older pets.

I look at the girl sitting next to me, with a cute little poodle in her arms. The poodle appears to be scratching incessantly, suffering from some sort of skin allergy. The girl tells me her pet frequently gets hot spots and she's been trying to figure out what is causing her dog's skin irritation and rashes. They have seen several vets and tried countless oral and topical medications, but the skin problem still persists. She looked so disheartened and hopeless that my heart immediately went out to her.

Like humans, health problems in pets may be triggered by poor nutrition and diet. Whether it be minor ailments such as allergies or major diseases such as cancer, food usually plays a critical role in any living being's overall health and wellness. But, unlike humans, pets do not make their own food choices and rely solely on their pet parents to nourish them well. As pet parents, it is our full responsibility to make healthy food choices for our dogs and cats and allow them to live the longest life possible.

Commercial pet food usually contain inferior-quality proteins, too much fat and carbohydrates, highly processed grains, allergens, artificial preservatives, and other questionable ingredients or animal by-products. What's worse, some may even contain toxins and potential carcinogens such as aflatoxin, acylamide, BHT (butylated hydroxytoluene), BHA (butylated hydroxyanisole), to name a few.

Aside from food, other factors that contribute to a weakened immune system or ill-health in pets are genetics, vaccinations, topical pesticides, and environmental factors such as second-hand smoke, pollution, contaminated water, and household chemicals. As a general rule, anything that is harmful to humans is also harmful to pets (to an even larger degree since their bodies are much smaller than ours and they lick virtually any surface). Before you spray mosquito killer in the room or use strong cleaners to mop your floors, please think about your pet first.

This issue of Bow & Wow Times is truly an eye-opener, as we tackle the Food and Health connection. So, the next time your dog or cat suffers from stomach upsets, skin irritations, or even bad breath, try looking into his food bowl and you just might find the answer.

Happy Pet Parenting,

Pam So-Suarez
Brand Director
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our vision
to transform pet owners into pet parents

our values

- 🐾 We believe dogs and cats must have the best nutrition and health care available.
- 🐾 We believe dogs and cats are not toys for our amusement; they have feelings, they are very loyal and they need our tender loving care.
- 🐾 We believe the best way to acquire new pets is through pet adoption from the animal shelters.
- 🐾 We are against selling dogs and cats in pet shops which involves prolonged confinement in small cages.
- 🐾 We are against all forms of animal cruelty including chaining and caging dogs.
- 🐾 We support the good work of organizations like Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), Compassion & Responsibility for Animals (CARA), and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).

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We digest it for pet parents...The Bow & Wow Times tracks all relevant pet information from key websites, magazines, journals, animal research and studies, and other credible sources. Then we summarize what is essential for you to know in order to raise healthy and happy pets, and become the best pet parents you can be. The Bow & Wow Times is in no way intended to replace the knowledge and/or diagnoses of veterinary professionals. Always consult with your veterinarian whenever a health problem arises which requires expert care.

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Is Your Pet the *Sensitive* Type?

How to tell if your pet has a food sensitivity



Even when you're committed to providing your pet with the healthiest nutrition possible, there is always the possibility that he or she may be sensitive to an ingredient in their food. Sometimes this can result in an allergic reaction, with symptoms

like rashes, ear infections and more. Other times, it can turn out to be a food intolerance resulting in gastrointestinal or digestive problems.

Understanding all that you can about food sensitivities—the causes, symptoms, etc.—can go a long way to helping solve the problem for your pet. One thing is for sure, with 14 million dogs alone in the United States having food sensitivity, pet parents need to carefully consider what they feed their furry friends.

Food allergies

It can be difficult to determine what is causing an allergy in your pet. Some causes are seasonal, like dust, weeds, pollen, etc. Often times fleas are the culprit. If the allergic symptoms persist throughout the year and are not confined to certain seasons, it can point to a food allergy.

What makes a food allergy different—and so hard to identify—is that it typically requires time to develop. Pet parents sometimes think that the development of a food allergy is caused by a new food. In fact, if your dog or cat has an immediate adverse reaction to a new food it is probably not an allergic reaction, because it takes more than one exposure to an allergen to produce a reaction.

Making the issue even more confusing, is that the symptoms of food allergies are often similar to those of other allergies, including:

- 🐾 Skin irritation
- 🐾 Itching
- 🐾 Rashes
- 🐾 Breathing difficulties
- 🐾 Ear infections
- 🐾 Hair loss
- 🐾 Frequent bowel movements
- 🐾 Hot spots that reoccur even after antibiotic or steroid treatment

Food intolerances

A food intolerance occurs when your dog or cat has trouble assimilating a particular ingredient in their food. This is different from an allergic reaction. The food intolerance most often presents itself as an inflammation in the intestinal tract, not an immunologic inflammation typically seen on the skin. A moderate to severe reaction in your pet can lead to a more serious condition such as Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD), so it's important to be aware of any symptoms that may occur. These can include:

- 🐾 Stomach gurgling
- 🐾 Diarrhea
- 🐾 Flatulence
- 🐾 Vomiting



Common pet food ingredients known to trigger allergic reactions or intolerances

While some dogs or cats tolerate most ingredients with no problem, there are common pet food ingredients that have been found to pose allergy and/or intolerance issues in many pets. These include:

- 🐾 Corn
- 🐾 Wheat
- 🐾 Soy
- 🐾 Chicken
- 🐾 Beef
- 🐾 Lamb
- 🐾 Eggs
- 🐾 Dairy products
- 🐾 Food Additives
- 🐾 Artificial Preservatives
- 🐾 Animal By-products

Some pet food may contain more of these ingredients than you think because pet food manufacturers list them in various forms. Often you'll see "ground corn", "corn gluten" and "corn bran" listed on the ingredient label. That can add up to a lot of corn. And if your dog or cat is allergic to it, it could very easily be the source of his food sensitivity.

Dealing with a food sensitivity starts with changing your pet's food

If your dog or cat appears to have food sensitivity, you might just try changing his or her food. Consider a high-quality, limited-ingredient diet with a protein such as turkey or fish—not chicken or beef. Limited ingredient diets are designed specifically for pets with food sensitivities because they are formulated without ingredients that have been known to cause allergies.

But to be sure that you are correctly identifying and addressing your pet's health needs, it is always best to consult with your veterinarian. 🌐

Source: bluebuffalo.com

5 Tell-tale Signs of Poor Pet Nutrition



Pet nutrition is a hot topic in pet parent circles, and how you feed your pet affects much more than your animal's weight. Poor nutrition can have an impact on your pet's skin, coat, joint health, and even behavior. We all want to do the best for our pets and managing what we feed them is key to ensuring their well-being. The challenge is, pets can't talk so we have to rely on other ways of recognizing when their nutrition is off-base. Here are the top five tell-tale signs your pet is not getting the correct nutrition, and the changes you should expect to see when the pet is benefitting from a healthy diet.

1. Skin and coat condition: The coat is probably the most commonly examined feature of a dog or cat in reference to its general health. Owners readily notice changes in the coat which can include dry and flaky dandruff, a lackluster or dull-looking coat, redness of the skin, and ultimately, itching and allergies. With proper nutrition, the coat should be lustrous and shiny, free of any flax or dandruff, and with a markedly improved general body odor.

2. Halitosis: Many pet owners believe that 'doggy breath' is normal for all dogs and cats. This is actually far from the truth because halitosis (bad breath) is a conclusive sign of poor oral hygiene. Plaque and tartar will build up on the teeth, leading to gingivitis (red inflamed gums), which harbors literally millions of bacteria. Left untreated, this type of oral condition will further progress into reabsorption of bone and loss of teeth. The bacteria living in the plaque and tartar can also spread into the bloodstream and seed infections into other organs, such as the kidney and the heart.

3. Fecal output: Another area where pet owners can maintain vigilance on the animal's health is fecal output. A healthy dog eating an appropriate diet should have well-formed and firm feces, and the dog should pass these feces without significant effort. Generally if the dog's fed once daily, they will tend to empty their bowels once-a-day. Signs of poor nutrition will eventuate in sloppy or wet feces, occasional showing signs of mucous, and blood. Dogs that have persistent sloppy feces will also have chronic anal gland problems, and are likely to be seen 'scooting' on their bottom or licking and chewing in the general area of the tail base.

4. Urine output: Very helpful when managing dogs or cats with chronic disease. Generally urine tests are done in combination with other blood tests. With urinary tract problems and UTIs we see a significantly higher presentation of dogs and cats that eat predominantly dry food. Checking the PH of your pet's urine is a good indicator of how their diet is affecting them. A dog or cat eating an appropriate diet containing high levels of red meat will have significantly acidic urine, the PH somewhere between four and six. Dogs that are eating poor quality food which is high in carbohydrate and vegetable matter and lower in meat protein will tend to have either a neutral pH or even slightly alkaline. In the alkaline environment crystals and stones will form, and bacterial population of the bladder wall can result in blood in the urine, painful urination, and significantly increased frequency of urination. Older dogs and cats being treated for chronic kidney failure will generally have significantly high thirst and fluid intake, which is the natural process of dialysis.

5. Dry nose and slumped tail: A wet nose and wagging tail have always been good indicators of internal health. The dog's nose should be permanently moist. If an animal has a persistent high fever the nose will quickly become dry, indicating that something is wrong. With chronic kidney failure, fluid intake does not always compensate for fluid loss by the urine leaving the sufferer just slightly dehydrated, which again will show up as a dry nose. Significant zinc deficiency in the diet will also lead to chronic changes in the nasal pad which tends to cause significant scaling and increased crust in the nasal area.

As with any veterinary problem, if you suspect your pet is suffering the effects of poor nutrition, the first step is to consult your vet. 🐾

Source: earnestparenting.com

Top 10 Signs of Cancer in Pets



Cancer is the #1 Disease-Related Killer of Pets

Many people do not realize that cancer is not just a human condition; it affects our pets as well. In fact, cancer is the number one disease-related killer of dogs and cats. According to Dr. Lorie Huston, she tells her clients to be on the lookout for the following signs. While these symptoms are not purely indicative of cancer, if a pet begins to exhibit them you should visit your veterinarian immediately. Just like with people, the earlier cancer is caught, the better.

#10 Lumps and Bumps

Not all lumps and bumps on or under your dog or cat's skin will be cancerous, but there is no way to know for sure without getting your veterinarian involved – this is especially important if the lump is not resolving itself or is growing in size. A needle biopsy is commonly done and a veterinary pathologist can let you know if the cells are cancerous or not.

#9 Abnormal Odors

Offensive odors from your dog or cat's mouth, ears, or any other part of your pet's body, should be checked out. Oftentimes cancers of the mouth, nose, or anal regions can cause such foul odors.

#8 Abnormal Discharges

Blood, pus, vomiting, diarrhea, or any other abnormal substance being discharged from any part of your pet's body should be checked out by your veterinarian. In addition to that, if your dog or cat's abdomen becomes bloated or distended it could be a sign of an accumulation of abnormal discharge within the body.

#7 Non-Healing Wounds

If your pet has wounds or sores that are not healing, it could be a sign of infection, skin disease, or even cancer.

#6 Weight Loss

Cancer is among the list of diseases that can cause weight loss in a pet. If you notice sudden weight loss in your dog or cat (and it is not currently on a diet), along with other signs from this list, be sure to mention it to your veterinarian.

#5 Change in Appetite

Dogs and cats do not stop eating without a cause. While a lack of appetite does not automatically indicate cancer, it is still something to be discussed with your veterinarian. Oral tumors can also cause difficulty or pain when eating or swallowing.

#4 Coughing or Difficulty Breathing

Coughing or abnormal breathing can be caused by heart disease, lung disease, and also cancer. Cancer can metastasize through the lungs and cause these symptoms.

#3 Lethargy or Depression

If you notice your pet is not acting like itself – sleeping more, less playful, less willing to go on walks or to exercise – this can also be a sign of cancer. Once again, lethargy or depression is not a symptom confined to cancer, but an accumulation of any of these signs is reason enough to speak with your veterinarian.

#2 Changes in Bathroom Habits

Changes in your pet's urinary or bowel habits – difficulty using the bathroom, frequent bathroom use, blood in urine or stool – these are all potential signs of cancer.

#1 Evidence of Pain

Limping or other evidence of pain while the pet is walking, running, or jumping is mostly associated with arthritic issues or joint or muscle diseases, but it can also be a sign of cancer (especially cancer of the bone). 🐾

Source: petmd.com

How Poor Nutrition Leads to Ill-Health in Animals



Like humans, animals require proper nutrition to maintain their health. When an animal receives inadequate nutrition, the consequences on its holistic health and well-being can be severe.

Malnutrition

A malnourished animal has received an insufficient quantity of life-sustaining nutrients, either due to neglect, disease, injury, or a natural event, such as drought or a scarcity of food. Malnutrition precedes starvation, which, if untreated, can lead to death.

Obesity

Obesity most commonly affects domesticated pets who have been overfed or given improper food sources, such as low-quality pet food or unwholesome “people” food. Extra weight places undue stress on organs, joints and ligaments, promoting disease and physical infirmities.

Diseases

Many diseases are rooted in poor nutrition. A malnourished animal may suffer from rickets, nerve and immune disorders, and other degenerative diseases, while an obese animal may have diabetes, heart disease, and increased blood pressure.

Behavioral Issues

A lack of adequate nutrition can produce behavioral problems in animals, including aggression, skittishness, and anxiety.

Lower Life Expectancy

Improperly nourished animals generally lead shorter lives than their healthy counterparts, as the issues associated with poor nutrition, such as disease, impair basic physiological functions. 🐾

Source: ehow.com

Improve Your **Pet's Coat** through **Nutrition**

Whether your pet's fur is long or short, curly or straight, you want to make sure your pet's skin and coat remain shiny and healthy. Several factors play a part in how healthy your pet's coat can be, and believe it or not, most of these involve what your furbaby eats. Proper diet and nutrition, as well as certain supplements, can make a big difference in your pet's outward appearance. Read on for nutrition tips that can help bring out the best in your pet's coat.

Feed High Quality Food

Poor nutrition is perhaps the number-one reason pets' coats lose their luster. Your cat or dog needs a balanced diet with the right proportions of carbs, fats, and protein. A high quality pet food contains these as well as important vitamins and minerals to keep all parts of your pet in good health.

Most pet owners feed some type of processed kibble or wet food, which means most of your pet's nutrition comes from one single source. Feeding processed food is okay, but you do need to be mindful of food quality. Check the labels of the food you feed. Make sure the first ingredient is some type of meat product. Pets are carnivores, and they should eat mostly meat. If corn or wheat is the number one ingredient, that is the hallmark of an inferior quality food. In fact, corn and wheat are known allergens that are the primary cause of skin problems in some pets. If you currently feed a pet food that contains these items, try switching to a food with barley or other whole grains instead, or even go grain free. You should start to see a difference in just a few weeks.

Try Coconut Oil

Natural oils in your pet's skin are what give its coat that beautiful luster and sheen. Coconut oil can be fed as a supplement to your pet's regular meals, and the healthy fats it contains will show through in your pet's skin and fur. In the past, this oil gained a poor reputation because it was one of only a few plant-based oils that contain saturated fats. However, the scientific community has found that the type of fat contained in coconut oil, lauric acid, does not interfere with the ratio of good and bad cholesterol, and may have additional health benefits as well. Make sure you use virgin coconut oil that has not been processed.



Avoid Feeding Table Scraps

Pets are great beggars, and it can be difficult to resist those soulful eyes when you're sitting at the table. If you're concerned about your pet's coat, though, try to resist feeding table scraps to your pet. Some processed foods contain unhealthy chemicals and preservatives. Also, some foods that are acceptable for humans can be dangerous or difficult to digest for pets. Inner digestive trouble will, over time, project in your pet's outward appearance.

If your pet's coat is not as soft and shiny as you would like it to be, try some of these tips for a few weeks. You should see positive results within a few weeks. If you notice skin redness, irritation, or hair loss, please seek veterinary attention. 🐾

Sources: [voices.yahoo.com](https://www.voices.yahoo.com)

What's in Your



Pet's Food?

Plump whole chickens, choice cuts of beef, fresh grains, and all the wholesome nutrition your dog or cat will ever need. These are the images pet food manufacturers promulgate through the media and advertising. Here's a peek at what's really in most commercial pet food brands.

Animal Protein and By-Products

Dogs and cats are carnivores, and do best on a meat-based diet. The protein used in pet food comes from a variety of sources. When animals are slaughtered, lean muscle tissue is trimmed away from the carcass for human consumption, along with the few organs that people like to eat, such as tongues and tripe.

Whatever remains of the carcass — heads, feet, bones, blood, intestines, lungs, spleens, livers, ligaments, fat trimmings, unborn babies, and other parts not generally consumed by humans — is used in pet food, animal feed, fertilizer, industrial lubricants, soap, rubber, and other products. These “other parts” are known as “by-products.”

The better brands of pet food, such as many “natural,” and “organic” varieties, do not use by-products. On the label, you'll see one or more named meats among the first few ingredients, such as “turkey” or “lamb.”

Rendered Ingredients

Rendering (basically a slow-cooking process) produces two significant ingredients: animal fat or tallow and a processed “meal” product. The latter may be called meat meal, meat-and-bone meal, or by-product meal depending on its composition. Due to historical quirks in naming, the term “by-product meal” refers to poultry, while the equivalent mammalian product is called “meat and bone meal.” Rendered products are found primarily in dry pet foods.

Animals that are dead, dying, diseased, or disabled prior to reaching the slaughterhouse are known as “downers” or “4D” animals. These are usually condemned, in whole or in part, for human consumption, and they are generally sent for rendering along with other by-products, parts and items that are unwanted or unsuitable for human use: such as, out-of-date supermarket meats (including their plastic wrappers), cut-away cancerous tissue, and fetal tissue (which is very high in hormones).

Some manufacturers are now calling this ingredient “beef and bone meal” and similarly euphemistic terms, which are deliberately coined to mislead you.

Additives in Processed Pet Foods

Many chemicals are added to commercial pet foods to improve the taste, stability, characteristics, or appearance of the food. Additives provide no nutritional value. Additives include emulsifiers to prevent water and fat from separating, and artificial colors or flavors to make the product more attractive to consumers and more palatable to the pets.

Chemical vs. Natural Preservatives

Because manufacturers need to ensure that dry foods have a long shelf life to remain edible through shipping and storage, fats used in pet foods are preserved with either synthetic or “natural” preservatives. Synthetic preservatives include butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA) and butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT), propyl gallate, propylene glycol (also used as a less-toxic version of automotive antifreeze), and ethoxyquin. Propylene glycol was banned in cat food because it causes anemia in cats, but it is still allowed in dog food.

Many pet food makers have responded to consumer concern, and are now using “natural” preservatives such as Vitamin C (ascorbate), Vitamin E (mixed tocopherols), and oils of rosemary, clove, or other spices, to preserve the fats in their products.

Nutrition-Related Diseases

Health problems associated with diet include urinary tract disease, kidney disease, dental disease, obesity, chronic digestive problems, bloat, heart disease, and hyperthyroidism.

Many nutritional problems appeared with the popularity of cereal-based commercial pet foods. Some have occurred because the diet was incomplete. Other problems may occur from reactions to additives. Others are a result of contamination with bacteria, mold, drugs, or other toxins.

The bottom line is that diets composed primarily of low quality cereals and rendered meals are not as nutritious or safe as you should expect for your cat or dog. Look for brands made by conscientious manufacturers who take great pride in producing top-tier products designed to significantly enhance and extend your pet's life. 🐾

Sources: naturalnews.com; bornfreeusa.org

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