

Nutrition

Our pets are just like us in that they are healthiest when eating a balanced variety of fresh, whole food ingredients. Raw food is ideal for most pets, but sometimes this is not practical due to the high cost for a large dog or animals that have sensitive gastrointestinal tracts (often seen in older animals). The next ideal option is home cooking. The next option is canned food with a human grade ingredient meat and minimal carbohydrates or complex carbohydrates like barley, oats and quinoa. Finally, we have human grade ingredient no grain dry diets. It is always best to rotate through at least three protein sources although you need to be cautious when changing the diet in animals with a history of a sensitive stomach. Consider supplementing your pet's diet with small amounts of sardines, eggs, or wild caught cooked salmon several times a week. If you can't feed raw or home cook regularly, consider supplementing your pet when you can with fresh fruits and veggies and cooked meats. Also, feeding raw marrow beef or buffalo bones from Primal or Bravo to your dog once weekly really helps with dental health. Thaw in the fridge prior to feeding so they do not break a tooth. The marrow must be removed prior to feeding for those who are not on a raw diet normally in order to prevent gastrointestinal upset. Please introduce slowly as bones can cause constipation in those who do not normally consume them.

Pre-Prepared Balanced Raw Diets

When initiating a raw food diet especially in older and sick pets it needs to be lightly cooked until your pet's gastrointestinal tract can tolerate the raw – this may be for one week to several months. Cooked raw bones can be very sharp even if very small so make sure your fingers only feel smoothness. Always add 500mg taurine daily to all raw diets if feeding a cat. Raw food needs to be picked up after 30 minutes if your pet does not eat it.

Look for human grade ingredients – organic is best, no grains, and preferably no or low carbohydrate vegetables especially for cats and animals with skin or gastrointestinal problems. Feline Raw Preferences: Feline Pride, Furry Foodies, Radcat, Bravo Balance and Darwin's. It is always good to add water to a cat's food particularly with cats with a history of urinary tract disease.

Please visit <http://bravorawdiet.com/BravoBeginningsDogs.pdf> for more information on changing to raw diets for dogs and www.catinfo.org for cats. Most animals that are not able to tolerate a raw diet will not eat it so be careful not to force it on them. I always recommend feeding a very small amount initially. If your pet has diarrhea or vomiting after eating raw diet initially, this indicates that they are not ready for raw food yet. Some pets will have hard stools on the raw diet and need fiber. This can be supplemented with 1 tsp of Metamucil or oat bran or 1 Tbs of pumpkin per 30lbs. There are a few things to interest a pet in eating raw food if they are not sure about it. Consider using dehydrated chicken such as the halo product liv-a-littles crumbled over the raw diet if needed to tempt an animal to eat raw. This product is available at Pet Sage or www.swansonvitamins.com. Ziwi peak daily cat or dog cuisine is a real meat jerky that is great for a topper if you can find it. Other topper options include parmesan cheese, fortiflora (a probiotic available at your vet that entices cats to eat), and bonito or fish flakes such as Kitty Caviar available at many pet stores and www.amazon.com. Finally, consider feeding them partially cooked organic chicken or turkey thighs.

There are various kits out there that are designed to add to store bought raw meats. I do not recommend these kits for raw meats usually as it is very difficult to buy meats in grocery

stores that do not have a significant bacterial load. I also do not recommend feeding freeze dried foods to cats as it is not possible to introduce enough water into the diet to maintain health. Lastly, I do not recommend feeding nothing but meat on bones like chicken necks. These diets are very unbalanced as they are often lacking vitamins and minerals including iodine and vitamin D and there is too much fat.

Aunt Jeni's Home Made

This is a natural or organic raw diet made with human grade meats and higher carbohydrate vegetables that meets AAFCO (Association of American Feed Control Officials) guidelines. Aunt Jeni received a Masters Degree in Animal Nutrition Science from University of Maryland. Alternative protein sources are available for those animals that need to be on a hypoallergenic diet. This diet is available at Pet Sage, Pro Feed, and Olde Towne School for Dogs. Aunt Jeni has a website at www.auntjeni.com.

BARF

A canine raw meat and low carbohydrate diet shipped to your house that is available online at www.barfworld.com or by phone at (866) 282-2273. You will need to use the following vet id: 1534. Varieties are chicken, beef, lamb, and a combination of beef, lamb, chicken and pork.

Bravo

Bravo Balance is another raw meat and low carbohydrate diet that meets AAFCO guidelines for a complete and balanced diet. Burgers are available in beef, chicken, and turkey. Visit www.bravorawdiet.com, Pro Feed, or Pet Sage.

Darwin's

A raw diet that meets AAFCO feeding requirements that is delivered to your home. The canine version is meat and a small amount of higher carbohydrate vegetables while the feline version is meat only. Meats are free range or human- grade and vegetables are organic. Dog varieties are chicken, duck, turkey, beef and buffalo. Cat varieties are chicken and turkey. This is available at www.darwinspet.com or (877) 738-6325. Please mention that I referred you.

Feline's Pride

This is a balanced all meat raw feline diet available in chicken, Cornish hen, duck, and turkey. The 2.5lb block can be cut with a chef's knife while frozen to allow for thawing of smaller portions. This is sold via their website www.felinespride.com.

Furry Foodie

A balanced feline and canine diet available at Pet Sage and Wylie Wagg. This diet is organic and meets AAFCO's feeding guidelines. The feline varieties are chicken, turkey, and rabbit. The canine version is beef. Their website is www.ayrshirefarm.com.

K-9 Craving

A USDA approved balanced raw meat and vegetable diet for canines available in duck, mackerel, elk, turkey, chicken, beef, and beef and chicken. Available at Profeed and www.k-9craving.com.

Nature's Variety

This is a meat and vegetable balanced AAFCO canine and feline diet available at Nature's Nibbles, Wylie Wagg, Pro Feed, and www.naturesvariety.com. The options are bison, chicken, lamb, beef, venison, and rabbit.

Primal

A raw meat and vegetable balanced diet available in beef, duck, pheasant, chicken, lamb, quail, venison, and turkey & sardine for canines. Feline varieties are beef & salmon, pheasant, turkey, chicken & salmon, quail, and venison. Both varieties have some high carbohydrate veggies, but in a small amount. This diet is hydrolyzed thus guaranteeing no salmonella or e.coli. Available at Nature's Nibbles, Wylie Wagg, Pro Feed, and Pet Sage. Their website is

www.primalpetfoods.com.

Rad Cat

A balanced feline diet that meets AAFCO requirements. It is available at Pet Sage in turkey, chicken and lamb flavors. The website is www.radfood.com.

Stella & Chewy's

A raw balanced diet for canines only at this point. Varieties are beef, chicken, duck, and lamb. These diets contain small amounts of high carbohydrate vegetables. This diet is hydrolyzed thus guaranteeing no salmonella or e.coli. Available at Nature's Nibbles. The website is

www.stellaandchewys.com.

Raw or Cooked Pre-Prepared Meat with Vitamins

Pet Sage has various protein sources of meats WITHOUT BONE available through Bravo (www.bravorawdiet.com) or Ayrshire farms (www.ayrshirefarm.com). There are also various boneless protein sources at www.hare-today.com. They also have a product called TC Feline with organ meat that is a powder you can mix with the raw or cooked meat. Check out their website at www.knowbonespetsupply.com. The canine version is available at www.knowbetterpetfood.com. The U-stew version is for cooked meat and the Better in the Raw with Liver is for raw meat. Another option for a supplement to balance the diet is platinum performance feline or canine available at www.platinumperformance.com. Often the organic supermarket meats tend to be cheaper so no need to splurge if you are not feeding raw. Yet another option is to order from www.hare-today.com whole ground chicken, turkey, or rabbit. Use the appropriate cat or dog version Better in the Raw supplement from www.knowbetterpetfood.com. For cats you can also use the "with bone" recipe located at www.catinfo.org. Once again, rotate through three protein sources and preferably three supplements as well.

Homemade Cooked Diets

There are many recipes in many books for homemade diets. Many of these recipes are for raw diet, but can be adapted by just cooking the meat. Once again, I do not recommend buying supermarket meats to be fed as a raw diet due to the high bacterial content. It is also good to rotate through at least three protein sources. It is usually best to make up a large batch of food every couple of weeks and freeze in 2lb or less containers. These diets will be good in the fridge for four days. Please use these diets within three months of making them. I recommend organic

The above homemade diets are adapted from Manual of Natural Veterinary Medicine by Wynn and Marsden. Animal essentials herbal multi, Rx vitamins for pets, Rx essentials for dogs, and Standard process whole body support are other options for supplements available at many websites. Rotate through three vitamins if possible. Vegetables and rice can be eliminated in the above diets in which case feed a ¼ lb of meat per 10lbs per day.

HOMECOOKED DIET

A small proportion of dogs need carbohydrates in order to maintain health and weight. If you decide to feed carbohydrates, please feed complex carbohydrates like quinoa, rolled oats, barley, etc. These complex carbohydrates are healthier in a number of ways including being less allergenic. A good source of non-grain carbohydrates is sweet potatoes or canned pumpkin (not the pumpkin filling kind!).

Adult dogs:

50% meat (at least 90% lean)
25% grains
25% veggies

So for average crock pot- 5 lbs meat, 2.5 cups grains, several handfuls of veggies. If cooking cruciferous vegetables then you can put into crock pot. Otherwise, recommend that add veggies once crock pot is done cooking and on warm cycle. Let it sit for 30 minutes or so - that way veggies will be cooked but not mush. Recommend add small piece of seaweed (nori) to pot while cooking grains. That will help to break down the grains for non-herbivore animals. Can cook grains separately or in a crock pot.

Cats:

75% meat (at least 90% lean)
15 % carb
10% veggies- cat often like asparagus, carrots, spinach, tomatoes
May prefer to leave out carbs since often times cat won't eat.
Recommend feed 1 cup/20 lbs or begin at 1.5 times what they were feeding in kibble.

This diet is from Connie Di Natale who is one of the teachers of the food therapy course at the Chi institute. See the above homemade diet for instructions on balancing these diets with products like Rx vitamins for the cat or dog before feeding as this will make sure that the diet has appropriate taurine, calcium/phosphorus ratio etc.

Steve Brown's High Protein, Low Fat Recipe for Dogs

14 oz chicken thighs, skin and separable fat removed

(lightly cooked in oven or pan – keep juices)

1 lb sweet potato, baked in skin

½ lb broccoli stalks, lightly cooked

3 oz organic chicken liver – lightly baked or sautéed

1 tsp eggshell powder

¼ tsp iodized salt

120 IUS (6 drops) Vitamin E

Feeding Amounts:

Dogs weight in pounds	Ounces per day to feed
5	6
15	14
25	21
45	32
75	47
100	58

These feeding amounts are for an older, inactive dog so the amount may need to be increased for younger or more active dogs.

This diet is from Unlocking the Ancestral Diet by Steve Brown.

Doggie Oats

5 cups raw rolled oats (about 11 cups cooked)

3 pounds (6 cups) lightly cooked in oven or pan with juices lean turkey, chicken, or beef (at least 90% lean) with 20% organic organ meat

¼ cup vegetable oil

1 cup lightly cooked vegetables

6 tablespoons Healthy Powder (see below)

8 teaspoons Naturvet Bone Meal *

10,000 IU vitamin A

400 IU vitamin E

1 teaspoon tamari soy sauce or ¼ teaspoon iodized salt

2 cloves garlic, crushed or minced

Bring 10 cups of water to a boil. Add the oats, cover and turn off the heat for 15 minutes or until soft. Don't stir while cooking as the oats will become mushy. Combine with other ingredients. Makes 19 cups.

* If substituting calcium sources, you must consult Dr. Pitcairn's book so as to ensure adequate calcium supplementation. Naturvet bone meal is available at www.entirelypets.com.

Grain substitutes for dogs: 1 cup rolled oats = ½ cup bulgar, millet, or barley

Feeding Amounts:

Weight of Dog in Pounds	Amount to Feed in Cups
0-15	1-2
15-30	4
30-60	6-7
60-90	8
>90	9

Beefy Oats for Cats

3 cups raw rolled oats or 4 ½ cups cooked oatmeal

2 large eggs

2 pounds (4 cups) ground at least 90% lean beef with 20% organic organ meat

4 tablespoons Healthy Powder (see below)

1 tablespoon Animal Essentials calcium (available at Pet Sage)

2 tablespoons vegetable oil or butter

10,000 IU vitamin A

200 IU vitamin E

1 tablespoon fresh lightly cooked grated vegetable with each meal

500 mg taurine

Bring 6 cups of water to a boil. Add the oats, cover, and turn off, letting the oats cook for about 10 minutes or until soft. Then stir in the eggs, letting them set slightly for a few minutes. Mix in the remaining ingredients. Yields 10 cups.

Cats usually prefer more meat than is provided in this recipe. This can be provided by lightly cooked beef with TC Instincts Beef with Liver at www.knowbonespetsupply.com or Pet Sage.

Feeding Amounts:

Cat's Weight in Pounds	Amount to Feed in Cups
4-6	½
7-9	scant cup
10-15	1 1/3

Healthy Powder

2 cups nutritional or brewer's yeast

1 cup lecithin granules

¼ cup kelp powder

8 tablespoons Naturvet bone meal (www.entirelypets.com)

1,000mg vitamin c (ground) or ¼ teaspoon sodium ascorbate

The two above oats recipes are from Richard Pitcairn's Dr. Pitcairn's Complete Guide to Natural Health for Dogs and Cats.

Dr. Royal's Easy Basic Canine Recipe

1 pound organic lightly cooked in a pan or oven chicken, no bones, leave on some but not all of the skin, include well chopped heart and liver, cut into pieces

½ cup unsweetened pumpkin (can vary with other squashes)

¼ cup veggie, e.g. cooked green beans

1/8 cup fruit, e.g. blueberries

500mg Fish oil

2000mg calcium from bone meal

Pet vitamin three times a week

Can add psyllium if stools are hard at 1tsp per 30lbs

This will feed a 30lb dog daily. A typical 30lb dog will eat 2-5 cups per day although this may be doubled in puppies.

Types of meats: beef, lamb (tends to be high fat), chicken (use only some of the skin), turkey, fish (sardines are easy, salmon must be cooked), tripe, rabbit, buffalo, venison, eggs

Types of veggies: pumpkin (baked), squashes (baked), sweet potato (baked), carrots (cooked), red or yellow peppers, cabbage, chard, romaine, endive, cucumber, kelp, spinach, zucchini, celery, green beans (cooked)

Types of fruits: blueberries, raspberries, watermelon, cantaloupe, apple, pear, papaya, pineapple

Recommended Nutritional Reading for Homemade Diets:

Raising Cats Naturally by Michelle Bernard

Your Cat by Elizabeth Hodgkins

Dr. Pitcairn's Complete Guide to Natural Health for Dogs and Cats by Richard Pitcairn

Unlocking the Canine Ancestral Diet by Steve Brown

The Whole Pet Diet by Andi Brown

Dr. Khalsa's Natural Dog by Deva Khalsa

Fresh Food and Ancient Wisdom by Ihor John Basko

Dr. Becker's Real Food for Healthy Dogs and Cats

Dehydrated Dog Foods

Honest Kitchen

These are balanced dehydrated diets available at Pet Sage, Pro Feed, Nature's Nibbles, and Wylie Wagg or www.honestkitchen.com. I would not recommend these for cats as it is not possible to add enough water to avoid urinary tract issues. Avoid Verve. They also make a product called preference which you can add to cooked meat. If your pet has a history of skin or gastrointestinal problems these diets are best avoided.

Calculating Carbohydrates from a Typical Pet Food Label

Example of food guaranteed analysis on a can of food:

Crude protein	Min 11%
Crude fat	Min 8%
Crude fiber	Max 1.5%
Moisture	Max 75%
Ash	Max 2.5%
Total	98%
Carbohydrates	2%

1. Figure out how much of the food is "dry matter". In this example the food is 75% moisture(water) so it is 25% dry matter.
2. Divide the percent of carbohydrates by the percent of dry matter (2 divided by 25 = .08). The food in this example is 8% carbohydrates.

Look for foods especially in cats that have less than 10% dry matter carbohydrates

Canned Foods

Many varieties are available that are not listed here. Look for human grade meats listed as the top ingredient – second only to water in some cases. Avoid canned foods that have starches added including corn starch and potato starch. Also avoid carbohydrates especially in cats or with a history of skin or gastrointestinal problems. Minimize vegetables if feeding a cat and especially make sure they are low carbohydrate vegetables. Please look closely to make sure the diet is balanced with taurine for cats, calcium, and vitamins as you may need to add these ingredients – see homemade diet. An average 10lb cat will eat two 3oz cans per day which is 200 kcal/day. Some cats particularly those that are young and active may eat up to twice this amount so be careful that you are not underfeeding. While on the topic of underfeeding, some of these canned foods contain a lot of gravy thus you need to feed more. For example, most cats eat one 5.5oz weruva can twice daily. It is always good to check the food's website to determine how many calories are in a can so that you can ensure you are providing the correct amount. If you are feeding a dog, one 15oz can equals one cup of dry food. Generally, we are feeding 4oz canned food for every 10lbs of dog.

Artemis - Recommend feline version only. Available at Pro Feed.

Avoderm Select Cuts - Recommend feline version only. Available at Pet Sage and Pro Feed.

*Before Grain - Hypoallergenic varieties. Available at Pro Feed and Nature's Nibbles.

*Best Friend Feline - Available at Pro Feed and Wylie Wagg.

By Nature - Recommend organics or 95% for cats or dogs. Available at Pet Sage and Pro Feed.

Dave's Naturally - Recommend 95% premium meats for dogs or grain free for cats. Available at Pro Feed.

Evangers - Recommend slow cooked stew for felines. The canine version needs to be balanced using supplements from the homemade diets. Use the grain free canned or 100% meat varieties. There are canine hypoallergenic varieties.

Fromm - Recommend feline version only although it does contain some potato starch. Available at Pro Feed.

Innova Evo 95% - Hypoallergenic varieties. This company was just bought out so watch for potential changes in formula or quality. Available at Pro Feed and Wylie Wagg.

Nature's Variety Instinct 95% - Hypoallergenic varieties. Available at Pro Feed, Nature's Nibbles, Wylie Wagg, and Pet Sage.

*Tiki Cat - Available at Pro Feed, Nature's Nibbles, or Wylie Wagg.

Wellness - Recommend the cubed or core for cats and core or 95% for dogs. The 95% needs to be balanced with supplements from the homemade diets. There are canine hypoallergenic varieties. Available at Pro Feed, Pet Sage, Nature's Nibbles, and Wylie Wagg.

*Weruva - Recommend feline version only although contains some potato starch. Available at Pro Feed, Nature's Nibbles, and Wylie Wagg.

Wysong 95% - Hypoallergenic varieties available as well at Pro Feed.

Ziwi Peak - Available at Pro Feed.

* Finicky felines prefer

No Grain Dry Foods

Dry food is not as desirable as the above foods due to higher carbohydrates and lower moisture. The following are some of the dry foods that are a compromise in that they are lower in carbohydrates and are human grade ingredient foods. These diets are very caloric dense so make sure you are feeding a measured amount in two or three daily meals. Make sure to look for meat as the number one ingredient – not meal! I generally do not recommend the dehydrated foods as it seems very difficult to add enough water.

Before Grain - Hypoallergenic varieties. Available at Pro Feed and Nature's Nibbles.

Horizon Legacy - Available at Pro Feed.

Innova Evo - The company has been bought out so watch for potential changes in quality or formula. Available at Pro Feed and Wylie Wagg.

Orijen - Available at Wylie Wagg, Pet Sage, Nature's Nibbles, and Pro Feed. They also have a product called Acana which is a little lower in protein.

Taste of the Wild - Available at Nature's Nibbles, Wylie Wagg, and Pro Feed. There is a fish variety which is hypoallergenic for dogs although an occasional dog will lose weight on fish diets.

Wellness Core - Hypoallergenic varieties. Available at Pet Sage and Nature's Nibbles.

Pet Stores

Nature's Nibbles
2601 Mount Vernon Ave
Alexandria, VA
(703) 931-5241
www.naturesnibbles.com

Pro Feed
3690 G King St.
Alexandria, VA
(703) 820-3888
www.profeedpet.com

Old Towne School for Dogs
529 Oronoco St.
Alexandria, VA
(703) 836-7643
www.otsfd.com

Pet Sage
2931 S. Dove St.
Alexandria, VA
(703) 299-5044
www.petsage.com
Wylie Wagg
2509 N. Franklin Rd.
Arlington, VA
(703) 875-2007
www.wyliewagg.com