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## Raw Food Diets for Pets

### What is a raw food diet?

- A raw food diet consists of fresh, uncooked meats mixed with a small amount of fruits, vegetables and a source of calcium, such as raw bone, to create a complete and balanced diet that will meet a dog or cat's optimal nutrition needs.

### Won't my pet get sick from bacteria in raw meat?

- When handled and prepared properly, a raw diet is perfectly safe for dogs and cats with normally functioning immune systems.

### How can that be?

- Dogs and cats are **carnivores** that descended from the grey wolf and the African wild cat, respectively. As such, they share the same nutritional needs.
- With shorter digestive tracts and a higher acid content in the gut than the human digestive system, domesticated dogs and cats are designed to consume raw meat and eliminate organisms that would pose a threat in the human body, just like the wolf and the wildcat do. On a raw food diet, cats' and dogs' stomachs return to their proper pH which naturally protects them. (Follow our transition tips below for optimum success and to protect against bacteria while making the switch.)

### It sounds like a lot of work to prepare. How do I feed a raw diet to my pet?

- Feeding a raw food diet is made very simple and safe through the use of commercially prepared raw foods, such as *Steve's Real Raw Food*, *K9 Kravings*, *Answers*, *Primal*, *Tucker's* or *Stella & Chewy's Raw Diet*. These diets are complete and balanced which means they contain all the ingredients, vitamins, and minerals your pet requires for *optimal* health and nutrition, far beyond that of any processed food.
- To feed, remove a serving of raw food from the freezer and place in the refrigerator to thaw. Once thawed, place the serving in your pet's dish and watch them devour. It's that simple!
- The raw food diet also comes in a shelf stable version called Freeze-Dried where all you have to do is add filtered water for necessary moisture. Try *Open Farm Freeze Dried Nuggets*, *Stella & Chewy's Freeze Dried Meal Mixers or Patties*, *Steve's Freeze Dried Nuggets* or *Primal Freeze Dried Nuggets*.

### Can I get sick from feeding my pet raw food?

- Raw food diets should be handled in the exact same manner as you would handle raw meats that you might prepare for your own consumption. In fact, the meats in the raw food diets we offer are of the same grade as those you would purchase for yourself at the grocery store.

### How do I make the switch to raw?

- Many pets have no problem switching right over to a raw food diet. You know your pet better than anyone. If you are unsure, or if your pet has a history of sensitivity to dietary change, you may want to take the time to transition between the two foods over a period of 1 to 3 weeks. Begin gradually introducing raw food into your pet's current diet and slowly decrease the amount of the old food as you proportionately increase the portion of new food. If you need help determining feeding amounts, just ask us! We have the tools to make these calculations quickly and accurately.
- During transitions, and anytime you are feeding raw food and kibble together, adding a probiotic and/or organic apple cider vinegar will help to balance the pH in your pet's stomach, crowd out harmful bacteria, assist in the digestion of bone and the absorption of minerals. This addition is recommended because these types of food are processed in your pet's digestive tract differently. Add 1 tsp to 1 Tbsp of organic Apple Cider Vinegar, per 50 lb. of body weight, to your pet's meal.
- For probiotics, we recommend *Primal Raw Goat's Milk*, *Steve's Raw Goat's Milk Yogurt*, *Answer's Raw Fermented Goat or Cow's Kefir*, *Nature's Pharmacy Digestive Enhancer or Probiotic Max*, *Animal Essentials Plant Enzymes*, or *Ark Naturals Gentle Digest* which can be mixed into your pet's food or fed on the side.

<https://healthypets.mercola.com/sites/healthypets/archive/2013/04/01/raw-food-diet-part-1.aspx>

<https://healthypets.mercola.com/sites/healthypets/archive/2013/04/08/raw-food-diet-part-2.aspx>

<https://www.dogsnaturallymagazine.com/can-you-mix-raw-dog-food-with-kibble/>