



# raw food basics

For Pete's Sake Natural Nutrition for Pets 7728 Marker Road ~ Middletown, MD 21769 301.371.7729

## How Much

The recommendation for most adult dogs is to feed 2-3% of the dog's ideal weight each day. Young puppies can eat as much as 10% of their weight. You can adjust this amount for your dog's needs, the goal being a lean dog. If your dog's needs fall far outside this guideline, consider having a vet run some tests.

## Examples of 2-3 % (per day amt)

10 lb dog = 0.2 to 0.3 lb (about 1/4 lb)

20 lb dog = 0.4 to 0.6 lb (about 1/2 lb)

40 lb dog = 0.8 to 1.2 lb (about 3/4 to 1-1/4 lb)

70 lb dog = 1.4 to 2.1 lb (about 1-1/2 to 2 lb)

## Storage

Handle your dog's raw food as you would any raw meat. Defrosting takes longer when bones are included, so plan ahead if you do all the defrosting in the refrigerator. Never defrost or warm your dog's raw food in the microwave because you can inadvertently cook portions of the food. **Note:** Microwaves change the make-up of food and destroy vital enzymes. If your pet won't eat chilled food, soak the food container in a container of warm (not hot) water to bring it to room temperature.

## Bones

If your dog has never had raw bones before you should always supervise. The first time you offer parts like necks and backs you may want to hold on to one end while they start to gnaw the other, to help them learn to chew it rather than inhale it. Bigger is safer when it comes to recreational bones for dogs, so they scrape the bone rather than crack it open. When it gets too small (small enough that they could swallow it) offer them a delectable treat in trade and throw the bone fragment away. Your dog needs more than meat to thrive. Think of it as recreating a prey animal for your pet, with a few treats thrown in.

## Calcium

Your dog needs raw bone or processed calcium for a complete diet. Different meats have different mineral balances, so it's important to give a variety, even if you're feeding a "complete" food. If your dog does not tolerate a variety of meats, we suggest using a mineral or multi-vitamin supplement.

## Organs

Liver, kidney, spleen, green tripe, and other organs and parts provide important vitamins, minerals, amino acids, enzymes, and more. Remember, you're building a carcass for your dog, and these parts shouldn't be ignored. Liver is very high in Vitamin A, so if you're offering dried liver as a treat offer only small amounts.

## Essential Fatty Acids

These would normally come from the food itself, but most farmed meat is deficient in this regard. Supplementing daily with an oil high in Omega 3's such as fish body oil or flax oil is important. There are also mixed oils that provide a range of EFA's from several sources.

## Eggs

Eggs are almost the perfect protein, with EFA's and essential trace minerals. Dogs should be eating an egg (with or without shell) 2 to 3 times a week. Remember to shop carefully for your eggs too, and look for organic and free-range on the label (you can even find producers that feed their chickens extra Omega 3's).

## Vegetables and Fruits

Variety is important, with a focus on leafy greens. For most dogs, the veggie portion should be 10-30% of their total food. It's easy to throw some into a food processor to pulp them. Small amounts of fruits (especially berries) add nutrients too, though tropical fruits are very high in sugar and should be

kept to a minimum. If your dog needs to lose weight, vegetables (even canned pumpkin or cooked and mashed white potato) are an easy way to add bulk to the diet without adding a lot of calories.

## Grains

Most dogs don't need grains, and in fact may be better off avoiding them. However, some dogs benefit from a minor addition of some grains to the diet. A small amount of oatmeal can help some dogs with skin and coat problems, for instance. Very active dogs can benefit from the carbohydrates they get from grains. There are even pre-made mixes available that include grains such as oats, brown rice, kamut, spelt, quinoa, and barley. We recommend only a small amount, from a teaspoon (for a toy dog) to 1/2 cup (for a giant dog), but not more than 1/4 of the total diet.

Other supplements that may be helpful for your particular dog: raw apple cider vinegar, herb mixtures (we carry several, for everyday use and special needs), digestive enzymes, colostrum, multivitamins, joint supplements, and flower remedies.

## Suggested Reading

*Raw Dog Food: Make It Easy For You And Your Dog!* Carina Beth MacDonald

*Natural Nutrition For Dogs And Cats: The Ultimate Diet* Kymythy Schultze CCN AHI

*K9 Kitchen: Your Dog's Diet, The Truth Behind The Hype* Monica Segal AHCW

*Give Your Dog A Bone / Grow Your Pup With Bones / The BARF Diet* Ian Billinghurst DVM