

## **Raw Food Diet For Your Dogs**

by Kimberly Gauthier

We switched our dogs to raw food in April 2013 after being encouraged by other raw feeders and doing a few months of research. But I still wasn't prepared for feeding raw outside of ordering pre-made raw.

But raw feeding isn't just about ordering pre-made (premixed and ground) raw meals. There are a whole host of supplements and vitamins that address various health issues with our dogs that my research didn't touch.

Today, I'm not an expert, but I do have a great system and "menu" for our dogs which includes pre-made raw, supplements, vitamins and other ingredients that are specialized for each of our active dogs. I was able to do this by taking advantage of these five resources:

### **Amazon.com —**

There are loads of books about raw feeding that I love and I've created a few lists for my blog. I prefer to search Amazon.com, because they have so many books that can be downloaded to the Kindle at a great price. I check the reviews first, because I'm looking for books that are easy to follow. There is a lot to learn with raw feeding and I don't want to end up more confused after reading one person's take on the diet.

- Best Reading Material About Raw Dog Food and Dog Nutrition (<http://www.keepthetailwagging.com/best-reading-material-about-raw-dog-food/>)
- Raw Dog Food More Books to Help You Feed Your Dog Better (<http://www.keepthetailwagging.com/raw-dog-food-more-books-to-help-you-feed-your-dog-better/>)

### **Holistic Veterinarians and Nutritionists —**

I've found that holistic veterinarians are more open to raw feeding and take the time to educate themselves about the raw diet, natural supplements and other alternative ways to promote improved health in our dogs. →

## *Dear Readers,*

Because of the increasing amount of time each newsletter is requiring (about 1 1/2 weeks each month), I am going to begin creating this informative newsletter every two months.

Please send me (s.pacesetter@sheltie.com) any educational and informative article(s) which you think might be of help to other dog owners... as I have been encountering difficulties locating articles which would of value and interest to dog owners (over 5,000) who read this newsletter.

*Thank you!  
Nancy Lee*

*("Raw Food Diet For Your Dogs" cont.)*

One of our dogs had a partial cruciate tear and our traditional veterinarian recommended surgery. Our holistic veterinarian suggested laser therapy and our nutritionist suggested natural supplements that worked. Sydney has recovered. Not all dogs are this lucky, but we think that we caught it early enough to approach her injury through nutrition.

### **Dog Health and Dog Owner Blogs —**

I write the blog "Keep the Tail Wagging" and this year I've changed my focus to raising dogs naturally because I truly believe that this is the best course for our four dogs and I want to share what we're learning with others. I'm not the only one and I follow "My Rotten Dogs" and two large dog nutrition and health websites; you can find my favorites here:

- Books, Blogs, and Facebook Groups about Raw Dog Food (<http://www.keepthetailwagging.com/books-blogs-and-facebook-groups-about-raw-dog-food/>)

### **Your Veterinarian —**

Our veterinarian surprised us this year when we came out as raw feeders. She wasn't a fan, but after examining each of our dogs, she announced that they were all healthy and gave us some tips. Even if your veterinarian isn't on board with raw feeding, what's

*(continued on next page)*

*(“Raw Food Died For Your Dogs” cont.)*

most important is that you can have an open discussion about all topics. If you have a “my way or the highway” type of vet, find a new one.

### **Raw Feeding Communities and Groups —**

I have found many groups to be very intimidating. I respect strong opinions, but think it’s important to have an open mind, because there are so many things to consider when feeding raw and what works for me may not work for you. So I created a group that truly has no drama; it’s growing fast and everyone is just there to share about dog food and nutrition.

### **Raw Dog Food Chat —**

These are the resources that I believe pet owners new to or interested in raw feeding should check out. What’s nice is if you don’t have all five in your arsenal, at least you’ll have four! And, please join us over on Raw Dog Food Chat and let us know if you have any questions. It’s a no pressure environment of dog lovers. I’m not an expert, but I do have a great system and “menu” for our dogs which includes pre-made raw, supplements, vitamins and other ingredients that are specialized for each of our active dogs. I was able to do this by taking advantage of these five resources.

Author’s biography: Kimberly Gauthier is the Fur Mom to four dogs and founder of Keep the Tail Wagging,” an online magazine for dog lovers. By sharing her experience as a dog mom to four pups, Kimberly hopes to help others make better choices for their dogs too. □



## **Is Your Dog Afraid of Strangers?**

Most dogs are a bit uneasy when approached by unfamiliar people. If you have a new dog from a shelter that hasn’t been properly socialized as a puppy, he or she will be apprehensive and maybe even scared upon meeting new people. It’s understandable. After all, we humans aren’t always happy to meet new people. Therefore, it’s important how you approach a dog you have never met or if you own a dog to learn how to handle your dog when someone new approaches.

### **Some dogs are more gregarious than others —**

All dogs are not outgoing or used to meeting many types of strangers, especially if they were already shy when you adopted them or have received minimal supervised socialization with many types of humans. If you walk into a dog’s personal space or even stand and reach out to let him sniff you hand or to pet him he may feel threatened or are unsure of your intentions. It is scary for him or her.

If however, you stand straight up or crouch down on one knee while looking slightly away, then he can approach and sniff you at his own rate. You want to have the dog get used to you and not leaning over the pup, reaching over his head or grabbing and hugging the dog so he feels confined. Instead move slowly and smoothly in order to give the dog chance to back away.

### **Try to read the dog’s signals —**

Probably the biggest issue with dogs who are uncomfortable with some human greetings is that their owners as well as the unfamiliar greeters fail to recognize the tense body language. Watch for the signs: your dog may be tense for some reason...or he may be yawning, licking his lips or panting when he shouldn’t be hot. Most owners know their dogs so it’s important for you to watch those signs that your pup is scared or feeling uneasy.

### **The signs that it is safe to approach a dog —**

The body language you’d like to see when greeting a dog is one that says this whole business is natural and comfortable. The dog

*(“Is Your Dog Afraid of Strangers?” cont.)*

should remain relaxed and his gaze should be steady and soft. His tail should either wag or hang loosely down. Still approach slowly but you should be fine.

### **What you should do if your dog is scared when someone approaches —**

If you see these signs in your dog as someone reaches out to pet him, quickly move away so he’s out of range of the approaching person. You can simply explain to the new person that your dog is afraid of meeting new people that approach him quickly.

The end goal is to change your dog’s emotional state from scared to happy, so that he can eventually learn to associate unfamiliar people with good things. Consequently his fear can go away. Strangers can also toss treats while looking away, but unless you’re absolutely sure that you can tell when Fido is permanently comfortable with them, I’d avoid letting them pet him unless you have a professional coach you through the procedure.

### **If you approach an unfamiliar dog**

**(now you’re the stranger) —**

It’s important that you also watch the dog’s body language. A new dog may take treats from you but that doesn’t mean he’s ready to be touched. Watch the response to everything you do because sometimes a split second freeze or lift of the lip dictates that he is not ready to meet you and could bite. Instead, just be happy to give treats and admire the dog without touching and know that you’ve given him a good experience.

If all dog owners would allow our dogs to approach us at their own pace and try to watch the dog’s signals, it would be a great way to start a new friendship.

You can find more articles on pet care and advice on petpav.com, our pet social network that is like Facebook for pets. □

## CAN YOUR DOG OR CAT HAVE FOOD ALLERGIES?

Just as in humans, dogs and cats can have certain allergies to a specific type of food. In fact, food allergies account for about 10% of all the allergies seen in dogs and cats. It is the third most common cause after flea bite allergies. Food allergies affect both males and females and can show up as early as five months and as late as twelve years of age. Food allergies in dogs and cats can be cured with a little time, effort and change in diet.

### The Difference between Food Allergies and Intolerance to Food —

There is a difference between food allergies and food intolerance. Food allergies are true allergies and show the characteristic symptoms of allergies such as itching and skin problems associated with canine and feline allergies. Food intolerances can result in diarrhea or vomiting and do not create a typical allergic response. Food intolerances in cats or dogs would be similar to people who get an upset stomach from eating spicy foods or sometimes dairy. Fortunately, both food intolerances and allergies can be eliminated with a diet free from whatever food it is that is causing the allergy.

### The Most Common Food that Causes Allergies —

Several studies have shown that some ingredients are more likely to cause food allergies than others. The most common food that causes allergies in dogs and cats are beef, dairy products, chicken, lamb, fish, chicken eggs, corn, wheat and soy. Unfortunately, the most common offenders are the most common ingredients in dog and cat food. While some proteins might be slightly more allergy inducing than others, many proteins are similar and therefore the allergic reactions are associated with the amount of each in the food.

### Symptoms of Food Allergies —

The symptoms of food allergies are similar to those of most allergies seen in dogs and cats. The most common symptom is itchy skin affecting primarily the face, feet, ears, forelegs, armpits and the area around the anus. Symptoms may also include chronic ear infections, hair loss, excessive scratching, hot spots and skin infections that respond to antibiotics but reoccur after antibiotics are discontinued. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish food allergies from the more common allergies. One sign is if the allergies last all year round, it is probably a food allergy.

### Diagnosis for Food Allergies —

The diagnosis for food allergies is very straightforward. But due to the fact that many other problems can cause similar symptoms and that many times animals are suffering from more problems than just food allergies, it is very important that all other problems are properly identified and treated prior to undergoing diagnosis for food allergies. Your vet can determine if your dog or cat is just have a normal skin allergy.

### Try to Feed Your Dog or Cat a New Source of Protein —

A way to get rid of a food allergy is to feed your dog or cat a new food source of protein and carbohydrate for at least twelve weeks (i.e. a protein and carbohydrate that your dog or cat has never eaten before). Examples would include be rabbit and rice, or venison and potato. There are a number of such commercial diets available on the market. In addition, there are specialized diets that have the proteins and carbohydrates broken down into such small sizes that they no longer would trigger an

("Can Your Dog or Cat Have Food Allergies?" cont.)

allergic response. Regardless of the diet route you choose, the particular food needs to be the only thing that your dog or cat eats for 12 weeks. This means no treats, no flavored medications, no rawhide, cat nip, only the special food and water.

### Treatment for Food Allergies —

The treatment for food allergies is avoidance. Once you have been identified the offending food through a food trial, then they can be eliminated from the diet. Short-term relief may be gained with fatty acids, antihistamines, and steroids, but elimination of the products from the diet is the only long-term solution.

If you choose to feed your dog or cat a homemade diet, then you can periodically change the ingredients off your food and determine which ingredients are causing the food allergy. For example, if your dog or cat's symptoms subsided on a diet of rabbit and potatoes, then you can add beef to the diet for two weeks.

If your dog or cat still showed no symptoms, then you can add chicken for two weeks. If your beloved dog or cat now has symptoms, then chicken is clearly one of the things your dog or cat was allergic to. The chicken could be withdrawn and after the symptoms cleared up, a different ingredient could be added and so on until all of the offending ingredients were identified. A diet could then be formulated that was free of the offending food sources.

You can also you the same principal with very pure pet foods that are on the market and are chicken or beef based, and then add or switch accordingly.

As with all diets, make sure to check with your veterinarian to make sure that they agree with your basic diet and that all other allergies have been ruled out.

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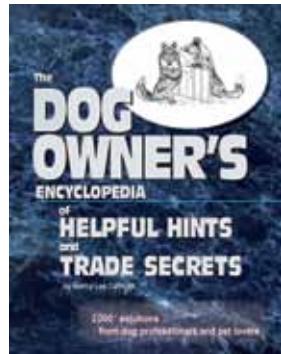
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