

The importance of nutrition in natural healing

Holistic or alternative methods of healing can be successful in all living beings but first we must assess the diet of the animal in question. If true healing is to take place, the body must be in proper nutritional condition.

If there are deficiencies or toxic levels of indigestible foodstuffs, chemicals or nutrients, then the body is too busy to concentrate on complete healing. As Hippocrates stated to physicians of his day, "Throw away your chemist's pots and heal thy patients with food". If we take the time to understand what each vitamin and mineral represents then it is easy to see the connection to current health issues.

The saying "you are what you eat" cannot be overstated. It is believed that ninety percent of all health and behavior problems can be resolved with correct nutrition.

Since the DNA of domestic canines has been proven to be genetically identical to their carnivorous cousin, the wolf, the controversy of Omnivore vs. Scavenger should no longer be an issue. Some people present the argument that wolves eat the stomachs of their prey in order to get the "vegetable" matter. According to people who have witnessed and study wolf kills, wolves and other carnivores enter through the stomach to get to the vital organs. The stomach contents themselves are not ingested.

However, if you are still unsure of your beliefs let's look at feral dogs as scavengers. Usually these feral dogs have limited reproductive lives, terrible skin and coat conditions, sadly underweight and malnourished, parasitic, infectious, weakness, short life spans. Coyotes, fox and wolves also look similar in environments that experience food shortages.

Now compare these same wolves and wild canines when the food source is abundant with meat and game. These animals have bright, shiny, plush coats that are free of parasites, strong bones and teeth, healthy and prolific with excellent muscle development and growth.

So with that said; here are some points to ponder.

- Do you feel your dogs are thriving on their current diet?
- Is their energy level normal for the breed?
- Is their temperament stable or are they obsessive, aggressive, fearful, timid, or sound sensitive?

- Are they structurally sound or do they have splayed feet, arthritis, hip or elbow dysplasia, eye conditions, bad teeth...?
- Finally, is your dog suffering from any number of digestive issues such as EPI, acute pancreatitis, intermittent vomiting or diarrhea, obesity, anorexia or bad breath?
- Other issues such as cancer, reproductive problems, milk production, cushings, self-mutilation, allergies, kidney disease, diabetes, liver function, are also believed to be directly or indirectly related to nutrition. All metabolic issues are also due to nutritional imbalances.

"THROW AWAY YOUR CHEMIST'S POTS AND HEAL THY PATIENTS WITH FOOD".

Genetics play a part in disease. Specific bloodlines carry certain diseases but not in the way we think. Normal genes are healthy genes, mutated and damaged genes are diseased. Deficiency and toxicity damage genes on a cellular level. Mutated genes are passed on from parent to offspring. Breeding two healthy parents does not necessarily mean we will get healthy offspring. Poor nutrition, vaccinations, chemical dewormers, steroids and other medications may not produce noticeable "harm" to the current generation but can have serious effects on the second and third generations.

What can we do?

Start with healthy animals free of genetic and degenerative disease. Breed only clear animals. (editors remark – or if you must use a carrier please be committed to test each and every one of the resulting offspring) Improve your dog's nutrition. Breeders are especially responsible for providing the building blocks for the next generation. If breeders are conscientious of health and nutrition we will be able to slow the progression and eventually stop disease.

Assess your dog's immune system. Is he/she strong enough to handle vaccinations? Do your research. Read books, make wise and informed decisions. Vaccinations are an UNNATURAL introduction of disease.

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Here are some points to evaluate your current feeding program.

Protein: 17 – 22% maximum dried protein.

10 amino acids with a high amount of Methionine and Tryptophan.

Balanced Omega 3 and 6

0 simple carbohydrates – such as white rice, sugars of any sort

Limited complex carbohydrates - good ones are brown rice, oatmeal or peas

Minimal vegetable proteins

7-10% animal fat

0 chemical preservatives

0 fillers including beet pulp, tomato pumace, brewers rice, wheat, soy

Most of us are aware that the “cheap” foods are not of adequate quality and should not be used as a mainstay dog food. Most of these products are manufactured in very large quantities using the 5 Ds:

Dead

Dying

Diseased

Decaying

De-natured

Unfit for Human consumption.

Higher end foods are also guilty of unscrupulous marketing techniques that leave us confused with well hidden and better disguised labeling.

The larger the ingredient list is, the less of each ingredient there is in the food. So although there are healthy ingredients listed, the amount of each ingredient is minimal and not enough to give any health benefits.

Specific meat in a meal is preferred to the wet weight. Look for chicken meal for example instead of chicken. The latter is weighed before the cooking process and once the water has been removed leaves little left over.

Beware of ingredient splitting. This is where the list of ingredient includes 3-5 variations of the same ingredient such as middlings, glutes and by-products.

Avoid anything that has by-products.

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Owners: Christine & Jason Edwards
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“...you can begin to reverse the damage that has been done by improper nutrition and chemical overload.”

Don't be fooled by marketing and advertising that uses pictures of “real” fruits and vegetables or berries and other things. These ingredients are attractive to humans but unnecessary and unavailable to our dogs. These ingredients are cooked and any nutritional content is lost through processing. Any cooked food is dead food, period!

We only have to imagine ourselves cooking berries, yogurt, salad, apples and cranberries before we ate them.

Raw meat contains natural digestive enzymes and requires little help from the pancreas. Cooked/dead food however does not have the enzymes necessary to aid in the digestion. Without these enzymes food will not digest properly, we therefore end up with malabsorption or maldigestion problems. Processed foods make the pancreas work overtime, putting excessive stress on the pancreas. The pancreas eventually wears out. Kidneys are also jump started into working overtime from not only eliminating toxins from chemicals in the system but also from excessive nitrogenous waste products from indigestible and excessive proteins. Two-year-old dogs have the kidney equivalent to a dog of seven years or older, and eventually they too wear out.

Essential fatty acids or EFAs are needed to facilitate the transportation of fat-soluble vitamins. Most commercial dog foods have insufficient amounts of EFAs. Without proper amounts of EFA our bodies eventually breaks down and malfunctions.

It is imperative to have balanced Omega 3s and 6s. Without balance, or too little of one and too much of another will create disease in itself. High amounts of Omega 6 can create tumor formations.

The other serious problem is the addition of “copious” amounts of vitamins that are added by manufacturers to compensate for those lost during processing. These vitamins cannot be assimilated by the body because the enzymes

necessary to facilitate the assimilation into the body have been destroyed in the cooking process.

Once these vital building blocks are in place and the body is in proper condition to take care of any health issues, you can begin to reverse the damage that has been done by improper nutrition and chemical overload.

We can assist the body in healing by adding herbs and homeopathy and avoiding chemicals, synthetic medicine, steroids, antibiotics and other symptomatic treatments.

Introduce natural de-wormers and parasite control

Control external pests naturally

Treat acute disease using herbs and homeopathy

Prevention

Avoid vaccinations unless in areas where epidemics are prevalent

Stay tuned for natural remedies for acute disease, emergency protocols, natural de-wormers, parasite repellents, immune boosters, detoxifying herbs, and chronic disease in the future issues.

Erika Phillips has been studying Animal Behavior/Nutrition and Alternative Medicine since 1990. She has studied at Guelph University in Canada, Glasgow University in Scotland and attended the British Institute of Homeopathy. Erika has bred, raised and competed with many breeds of dogs in all aspects of dog sport. She currently consults on Animal Nutrition, Animal Behaviour and Alternative Health, including herbs and homeopathy and owns The Controversial Canine. She currently resides in Ontario, Canada.

