

BETH BRADLEY

Nutrition and Your Dog

You are what you Eat

Feeding your dog is similar to feeding your child. The food must be good and unprocessed food. Dogs that are having house breaking issues, aggression, hyper activity and other behavioral issues benefit from a well balanced diet that agrees with his stomach.

Does your food agree with your dog?

Your dog should eliminate as many times as you are feeding him. For instance, if you are feeding two times per day, your dog should eliminate two times per day. Of course, if he is snacking in between, an additional bowel movement is not out of the ordinary.

If your dog is eliminating multiple times per day, he is not retaining any nutrition from the food and it is going through him undigested.

How does it look?

Yes, his bowel movements. The bowel movements should be firm and small. Big and soft bowel movements are indications of your dog's inability to digest his food.

Behavioral Issues?

Dogs or puppies who are not receiving the proper nutrition for will also have behavioral issues. Some issues that I have seen are: House breaking, mouthing, hyper activity, dog on dog aggression, separation anxiety, excessive barking, eliminating in his own bed or crate and even sometimes people aggression. No, changing food will not change Cujo into Lassie but it give your dog the ability to handle the stress of behavioral training so you can teach your dog how to act.

Types of Food:

For the issues I mentioned above, I do suggest a Raw Diet. The Raw diet is not processed. The raw diet does not require you to think; there are so many good complete diets that you can buy that will make your day easy. Yes, you do have to shop around, some diets are extremely expensive, and there are alternatives out there. I feed Raaw Energy Dog Food, out of central/south New Jersey. It is a complete diet and only requires a freezer to hold the food. You can have a change of protein sources, especially if your dog is allergic to a certain meat. The good thing about the raw is most (99%) dogs like it and it is not processed. <http://www.raawenergy.com/>

Personal Exerpience:

Based on past experience, I have seen the behavioral issues mentioned above and various other health issues controlled through the use of a raw diet. I have German Shepherds and they have sensitive stomachs, allergies and some do have stress issues. I can personally say that once I switched from kibble to raw, my one German Shepherd came

off of his daily medicine. It was costing me \$100 per week on medicine for itching and skin irritations and he was able to come completely off of all medicine.

Also, shedding, if your dog sheds a lot, it is because of the processed kibble. A Raw Diet will slow down the shedding experience tremendously.

When I have a client with house breaking or crate messing issues due to separation anxiety, immediate results are seen when switched to a raw diet. I believe the raw diet is so important in those instances that I will refuse to train with someone who refuses to switch to raw!

Salmonella and E Coli?

Yes, you have to be careful when handling the raw diet; but you are careful when preparing chicken or beef for yourself, no? Dogs are not susceptible to either and the raw diets are frozen to kill any contaminants.

Is there a Hunter in the Family?

I do not suggest feeding food that has been hunted in the wild unless you can deep freeze it for 3 months. The raw diets I am suggesting buy their meats from USDA butchers, the meats are good for human consumption and worm free for your dog.

Cost:

If you price it out per pound, the raw diet is comparable to kibble. The long term health benefits and savings on your time (cleaning crates and rugs) will more than make up for any cost difference you may encounter.

Kibble:

Do not buy a supermarket brand of dog food because they are very fibrous and may cause your puppy to relieve himself more than usual. Also, a lot of kibble has sugar in it; sugar does the same for dogs as it does for children.

Do not feed can food if at all possible. Can food is 75% moisture (water!) and will make your puppy have to urinate quite often. Once you pick a food, do not change your puppy's diet even for one day. The stomach of a puppy cannot handle the stress that a change in dog food brings. If you must change your puppy's food, change it gradually over a period of time.

If you must stay on kibble the only kibble I can recommend is Wellness or Royal Canine. But even those brands have had recalls as well.

Even though you may be feeding a high end kibble, that doesn't mean it is good for your dog's digestion. Each dog is an individual and his digestive system must be taken into account.

Conclusion:

Please, search for information on your own. You do not have to switch to a raw diet even though it is the best for your dog but you do need to find a brand that agrees with your dog. Read up on Raw vs. kibble. It may be a bit more inconvenient but feeding raw will give you a mentally and physically healthy dog.

Beth Bradley

Beth Bradley began studying animal behavior and dog training at 12 years of age. She became a New Jersey State Animal Control Officer in 1986. Beth graduated Rutgers University with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Criminal Justice. Throughout her schooling, Beth worked and studied under many well-renowned animal behaviorists and trainers. Beth formed her own company in 1989 and has made dog training her full time career since 1995. Beth is also a writer for the *Animal Companion*, she has produced CD-Roms and DVD's on training and is author of a training book titled *Real World Dog Training*.

Beth is a member of the German Shepherd Dog Club of America, the German Shepherd Dog Club of America – Working Dog Association, the United Schutzhund Clubs of America, and she is Secretary and Training Director of the Greater Philadelphia Schutzhund Club. Beth actively competes in both American Kennel Club and Schutzhund Trials both in the United States of America and Europe. Beth is a certified Canine Good Citizen Evaluator for the American Kennel Club. Beth can be contacted via the web at www.dog-trainer.biz or her business (973) 742-5088.