

Equine & Canine

Chiropractic + Massage



If you are a regular reader of my newsletters, both the one for animals and the one from my people practice you will know how much emphasis I put on good nutrition. In my health talk for my human patients I always point out that you can't believe all the advertising and claims on food packaging. You really need to look at the ingredients to judge if something actually is healthy. Usually the more processed a food, the worse it is for us. The same applies to our pets! A previous newsletter talked about cats as cats are pure carnivores and should not have vegetables or rice in their diet (even though many cat foods seem proud to contain this!)

Dog food



Dogs are also carnivores. They can digest vegetable matter but looking at a wolf, which is genetically only 1% different from our dogs, would they choose to eat vegetables? Probably not. But some carbohydrates in dog food are not as bad as in cat food.

However, have a look at what's actually in processed pet food.

- Meat –hopefully a high percentage but is this actually specified?
- Meal –by-products from human food production are rendered (heat-treated) to salvage any protein not suitable for human foods. Unfortunately this heating process also destroys valuable nutrients and natural enzymes.
- Cereal by products –again product that is not suitable for human consumption. Dogs can absorb carbohydrates from grains such as rice but nutrients from wheat, beans and oats have a poor

NEWSLETTER Autumn 2010

uptake. Some breeds are actually allergic to soya.

- Corn syrup -not just that it has no nutritional value, it is actually harmful by increasing insulin production thus potentially causing diabetes or other diseases.
- Additives and preservatives –to prolong shelf life, particularly of dry food these need to be added. Some are actually quite harmful, particularly if eaten every day!
- Vitamins and minerals –if the meat were of sufficient quality these would not need to be added. Once they are the food is again heat-treated so their quality is at best diminished.

Of course some brands are better than others and you tend to get what you pay for.

Real food is best

Just as for people dogs do best on real food. Raw meat, wholegrain rice, raw vegetables and even fruit and organic eggs. This might be a bit extreme for some dog owners but if your pet is suffering from a lot of health problems (allergies, tumours, arthritis, skin problems) then I would certainly give it a go. Otherwise make sure to read the label on the pet food and buy from the higher quality ranges. They may be more expensive but think of the money you will save in Vet's fees, as you will have a healthier pet!



Quote of the month

Until one has loved an animal, a part of one's soul remains unawakened.

- Anatole France

For more information contact:

Petra Langen-Pieters BHS AI EBW DC

07787 514271 or 01932 857782