

The Zen of Dog Training: Part 7

(Real) Food is Medicine

By Kimberly Artley

Note from the Author: *Discussing "nutrition" is much like talking politics or religion and could be considered quite "controversial" in nature. Although there are varying perspectives, this is my personal stance on nutrition, born of what I've learned through years of education, research and personal experience. I've seen offer remarkable improvements in the states of health in myself, my personal dogs, as well as clients' dogs following a physiologically, biologically and species-appropriate diet; and am sharing this information only to offer food for thought. In a world where we're expected to leave our health (and the health of our companion animals) in the hands of others who profit, we must question. We must advocate, and we must trust our own intelligence and gut instincts. If you have any questions about the content I'm sharing, you're most welcome to contact me at: kimberly@packfit.net. Healthy ways lead to healthy days! Yours in health and balance, Kimberly A.*

Nutrition. One of the most convoluted and complicated topics out there, and one countless individuals struggle with. The goal of this article is to help demystify nutrition in an easy-to-digest way, and offer tips on what to eat, what to feed, and why. Food for thought... *for both ends of the leash.*

We are what we eat. *Literally.* What's consumed by a body becomes a part of it; becoming the hair, coat, skin, nails, blood, organs, bones, tissues; and, yes, impacts and influences thoughts, mood and behavior. Knowing this, shouldn't we be paying closer attention to where our food is coming from, how it was raised, what it was injected or sprayed with, what it was fed, whether or not it's "real", and how many other questionable ingredients are in it?

Our dogs' quality of life and states of health are *entirely* dependent upon the choices and decisions we make. What we choose to provide and feed. And, sadly, we're setting ourselves, and our beloved companion animals, up for *health SOS*.

The fundamentals of nutrition are the same for both dogs and humans. Our choice of consumption is either nourishing... or not. Supporting health or toxicity. Balance or inflammation. Most ailments and disease are lifestyle related, one of the most common denominators being *malnourishment* and *inflammation*. "Malnourishment" because we're not taking in the types of foods our bodies were physi-

ologically designed to take in, utilize and absorb, and "inflammation" as our bodies' direct response to this.

Nature has already readily provided each species of animal everything it needs to live a healthy, robust life. The types of food and nourishment that *feed* the body and *strengthen* the immune system, allowing it to stand strong against whatever may attempt to throw down and combat it. When we eat *nature-made* not *man-made*, eat more of things that are their own single, solitary ingredient, and eat real not



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fake, we're supporting the body in all its efforts to both survive and truly thrive.

An animal's physiology will always dictate what that animal needs and should be taking in for sound health and a strong, healthy immune system. Eating the kinds of foods our bodies were *biologically designed* to take in will provide this, and speaks a language that needs no translating.

When we consider canine physiology, everything from the shape of the teeth, acidic pH balance in the system, short length of the intestinal tract, chomping motion of the jaws, all the way to the shape of the nails and digestion starting in the stomach; is directly pointing towards the type of food their bodies are meant to digest: raw meat, organs and bone.

If we consider human physiology, the shape of our teeth, more alkaline pH, longer length of the intestinal tract, grinding motion of our jaws, rounded shape of our nails and digestion starting in our mouths with the secretion of the carbohydrate enzyme "amylase", we're built and designed to take in more vegetation and plant matter.

Cows should be eating grass, not grains; and most definitely not GMO and chemically doused ones.

Chickens should be eating bugs, worms and insects.
Not grains.

Neither should be living in cramped barns and cages. Drinking dirty water. Injected

with hormones, steroids and antibiotics, and highly stressed 24/7.

While dogs are thousands of years descendent from wolves and their exterior has changed quite a bit, what their bodies are designed to take in and subsist on has not. It's not coincidence we're both ailing from the same types of diseases and illnesses (cancer, obesity, diabetes, IBS, allergies, and more). We're both living the same types of lifestyles and eating the same types of chemically altered, tainted, enzyme-deficient, highly processed food-like products.

What dogs should be eating is what their biology suggests, and it's not highly processed, enzyme-deficient, starchy food-like products, that contain numerous other questionable ingredients.

Let's put it this way. If you set two bowls in front of a dog: one full of what most consider "dog food" and one with a raw steak, which do you think he'll go for? Exactly. There's a lot of information right there and no reason to question this.

The type of food we're eating nowadays is nowhere near the type of food humans and dogs have been eating for thousands of years, and it's wreaking havoc on our bodies, our systems... and the planet.

Real food nourishes. Food-like product deprives.

Real food repairs and heals. Food-like product damages and destroys.

Real food supports. Food-like product erodes and compromises.

Real food fosters balance and strength. Food-like products foster malnourishment, inflammation, illness and disease.

Nutrition absolutely impacts and influences not only overall health, but also state of mind and behavior. *Everything is connected.* 🐾