

Benefits of a Raw Food Diet

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Raw food is my first choice in diet, for myself and my pets. Why? Most fundamentally, because I feel 100% better myself, and because it is only natural for my pets.

A balanced raw food diet gives you or your pet more energy, helps prevent degenerative diseases and aging, balances body weight, improves skin, improves signs of allergies, improves clear thinking, and decreases digestive disturbances. How does a raw diet accomplish all this? Read on and learn!

The alternative to raw food is standard processed foods such as kibble and canned food (or boxed, canned, or otherwise prepared for people). What you might not know is that the high heat and pressure used in the making of kibble and canned foods denatures (changes the shape, and hence the body's ability to use) delicate nutrients. This includes enzymes, antioxidants and micronutrients, all of which are essential for optimal health and vitality. Your pet's body (or your own body) must work harder to digest processed food (because processing has inactivated the needed digestive enzymes that would be present in raw food) and gets less out of it (because many nutrients have been destroyed). The body then sends signals to keep eating because it has not yet gotten enough nutrients, leading to overeating and weight gain (can you relate?). On my own mostly raw diet, I now eat so much less with no cravings, because I am getting more out of less food. The result is weight loss without trying, because my body is not telling me I need more "X". The same is true for your pet. Your pet will eat less, poop less, and will either lose or gain weight as needed.

And it isn't just that raw food has more nutrients than processed food. Processed food has more "bad" things than raw, thus burdening the body with extra work and toxins. These bad things not just purposely added to the food, but also come as a byproduct of processing itself.

Some toxins are added on purpose: Artificial preservatives, colors, flavor additives, and BHA/BHT (used to preserve fats and do not have to be listed on ingredient list if the fat comes to the company with the preservatives already added!).

In addition, the high heat and pressures used to make kibble and canned foods actually produce toxins. Trans fats, which are bad, are produced from good fats with heat. Free radicals, which cause damage throughout the body, are also produced. Advanced Glycation End-products (AGEs) are produced by the

cooking of foods. These toxic compounds bind to cells in various tissues of the body and contribute to chronic inflammatory conditions such as asthma, arthritis, kidney problems and more. AGE's have been implicated in the progression of age-related diseases, as well as in Alzheimer's, cardiovascular disease, and stroke. Besides just the immediate damage, the body must spend resources (antioxidants, energy) to eliminate these toxins. The effects of daily, long term ingestion builds up, limiting the health your pet can experience, likely contributing to such diseases as arthritis, allergies, asthma, kidney problems and more.

Home cooked diets are better than processed foods because lower temperatures are used, and more nutrients are retained. In addition, it is likely that fewer trans fats and AGEs are produced.

Overall, raw food is considered more bioavailable, with increased antioxidants, enzymes, micronutrients and phytonutrients which would otherwise be lost or damaged with processing. Equally as important, raw food does not burden the body with additional toxins.

I would challenge each and every one of you to try a three-day trial of eating raw foods yourself. You will immediately notice a difference so marked that you will be sold on the possible benefits for your pet, and maybe even yourself!

Feeding a raw diet does come with some responsibilities. A balanced diet is a must. A pet owner must either purchase a prepared raw diet that has been balanced, or do diligent homework to design a balanced homemade diet. Also, the handling of raw meat must be done with conscious care- do not let thawed meat stay in the refrigerator for more than 3 days; do not let meat stay out in food dishes for more than 30 minutes; wash dishes immediately after eating; take typical care with surfaces that come in contact with raw meat. Raw diets might not be optimal for pets with severely suppressed immune systems, such as those on chemotherapy. Preparing raw food might present a hazard for humans with severely suppressed immune systems.

If you feel that you are not quite up for a completely fresh, raw diet, ZiwiPeak offers an exceptional alternative. ZiwiPeak is air dried at temperatures that do not destroy delicate nutrients, but at the end of processing is exposed to a quick burst of higher temperature to kill bacteria. The minimal exposure to heat preserves more nutrients than dehydration or other processes. It is safe for those with a suppressed immune system. ZiwiPeak is also extremely convenient: No defrosting, easy to store, and simple to feed. Pets love it, so there are usually fewer transition problems. ZiwiPeak has many of the same health benefits as fresh, raw food. It can help with allergies, skin problems, energy, and weight

issues. The diet is complete, 95% digestible, with the percentage of meat, organs, tripe, bone and greens to mimic that of fresh prey. The next best thing to fresh raw!