

PREY-MODEL RAW DOG FOOD DIET

— LEARN HOW TO DO IT YOURSELF



More and more people are acknowledging the health benefits of feeding a raw diet to our dogs. So, how can one feed a raw diet in the most economical fashion possible? The answer is a do-it-yourself approach. Would you like to learn how to feed raw but don't know where to start? Well, here are the simple instructions.

Brief Introduction – Why a Raw Diet:

Why a raw diet? The Smithsonian Institution has taxonomically classified dogs as *Canis lupus familiaris*; this classification is a subspecies of the wolf (*Canis lupus*). Scientists have named at least 32 different subspecies of wolves. This means that the dog (*Canis lupus familiaris*), the timber wolf (*Canis lupus nubilus*), the Mackenzie or Tundra wolf (*Canis lupus occidentalis*), etc. fall under the genetic umbrella of the gray wolf, *Canis lupus*.

Animals have two types of DNA, nuclear (nDNA) and mitochondrial (mtDNA). Nuclear DNA is found in the nucleus of a cell. The genes coded for by nDNA are responsible for external or phenotypic characteristics and for behavior, while they also have important regulatory functions inside the cells.

On the other hand, mtDNA is separate and distinct from nDNA and is found in the mitochondria of the cell. The gene coding here is primarily regulatory for cell metabolism, including those responsible for the conversion of food to usable energy. So, in determining an appropriate diet for any species of animal, we can see the wisdom in looking at their mtDNA.

So, how closely does our canine partner's mtDNA match that of a wolf's? Robert K. Wayne, Ph.D., a canid biologist and molecular geneticist from UCLA, stated: "The domestic dog is an extremely close relative of the gray wolf, differing from it by at most 0.2% of mtDNA sequence. . . . In comparison, the gray wolf differs from its closest wild relative, the coyote, by about 4% of mitochondrial DNA sequence." ("Molecular Evolution of the Dog Family," Theoretical and Applied Genetics.)

Physiologically wolves are carnivores and since 99.8% of a dog's mtDNA is wolf, then logically dogs are likewise carnivores. As such, then it becomes abundantly clear that a dog's diet should mimic the diet of a wolf. So here's how to feed the best diet to your domesticated wolf:

How to Get Started on the Prey-Model Raw Diet:

- Sign up as a member on the Yahoo Rawfeeding Group:
<http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/rawfeeding/>.
- After signing up, you will receive by e-mail some website links which have informational reading material. Read every single page on every website that is sent to you. This is where you will get a good overview of the diet. This will probably consume several nights of reading, but be committed and read it all.
- Read the daily posts to the Yahoo group for at least a couple of weeks. A lot of the questions will be repetitive, but this will just reinforce what you are learning.
- Calculate your dog's dietary needs by weight. By weight, most dogs need from 2% to 3% of their ideal adult weight. If older, start at 2%, if young and energetic start at 3%. Smaller breeds start at 3%. Then adjust as needed.
- Feed 80% meat; 10% bone; and 10% organ (with 5% of the organ being liver).
- Bone is what firms the stools. Too little bone and you get loose stools; too much bone and stools are white and hard.
- First start by feeding just raw meat and raw bone. Once this is well tolerated for a couple of weeks without loose stools, then slowly start adding a little liver, organ, and other meat variety.
- Remember that the feeding regimen motto is "balance over time." After all, you do not eat a balanced diet every meal, but over time you do.
- Do not feed "weight-bearing" bones from ungulates. These "weight-bearing" bones could cause teeth damage.
- Do not buy meat labeled "plump and juicy" or "broth added." Added chemicals and sodium are counterproductive.
- Consider adding salmon oil or fish oil to the diet as farm-raised meat contains less omega 3 than free-range meat.
- Although dogs need fat in their diet, do not go overboard on feeding fat or fatty skin. After all, the meat from a kill by a wolf in the wild would generally be lean meat.
- You are no doubt eager to see the rewards of raw feeding. Raw feeding can be a powerful tool to improve your dog's health. So powerful that you may see external signs that your dog is going through detox. So, for older dogs, sick dogs, and constitutionally weak dogs, transition to raw slowly. You want the detox process to be gradual—something that their system, in its weakened condition, can handle.
- Finally, think: "What would a wolf eat?"

