

# SPECIES APPROPRIATE RAW DIET VS. KIBBLE



## The Dangers of Kibble: A Toxic, Over Processed Diet

**Kibble is the most commonly fed diet to dogs, yet it carries significant risks that many dog owners may not fully understand. Commercial kibble is a highly processed food that often contains harmful ingredients, synthetic additives, and toxins. Over time, these can lead to a host of health problems for dogs, including obesity, chronic inflammation, digestive issues, and more severe conditions like cancer and organ failure.**

### Additional Risks of a Kibble Diet

1. **Increased Risk of Cancer:** Some ingredients in kibble, such as the chemical preservatives BHA, BHT, and ethoxyquin, have been linked to cancer. Long-term consumption of these chemicals, which are used to prolong the shelf life of kibble, can increase the risk of cancers like lymphoma, hemangiosarcoma, and other tumors.
2. **Aflatoxins and Mycotoxins:** Grains used in kibble are susceptible to contamination by aflatoxins, which are toxic byproducts of mold growth. Aflatoxins are known carcinogens, and repeated exposure can lead to liver damage, immune system suppression, and cancer in dogs.

3. Digestive Issues and Bloat: Kibble is dehydrated and lacks natural enzymes, making it difficult for dogs to digest properly. Dogs often suffer from bloat (gastric torsion), a life-threatening condition where the stomach twists. This is more likely in dogs that eat kibble, which expands in the stomach after ingestion due to the addition of water. Bloating and indigestion are common in dogs fed kibble because their bodies struggle to break down the highly processed ingredients.
4. Kidney and Liver Strain: The synthetic vitamins and preservatives used in kibble can place an added burden on your dog's liver and kidneys as these organs must work overtime to process and eliminate the chemicals. Over time, this can lead to organ damage or failure.
5. Dehydration: Kibble contains very little moisture, forcing dogs to drink excessive amounts of water to stay hydrated. This constant need for hydration can strain the kidneys and lead to chronic dehydration, especially in dogs that don't drink enough water throughout the day. Chronic dehydration can exacerbate kidney disease and lead to urinary tract problems.
6. Poor Coat and Skin Health: The low-quality fats in kibble, combined with artificial additives, often result in poor coat quality and skin problems. Dogs fed kibble frequently suffer from dry, itchy skin, hot spots, and excessive shedding due to a lack of essential fatty acids like Omega-3s, which are found in raw meats.

### **The Benefits of a Species-Appropriate Raw Diet**

**A raw diet, designed to mimic the natural diet of wild canines, provides dogs with essential nutrients in their most bioavailable forms. Unlike kibble, a raw diet offers fresh, unprocessed ingredients that improve overall health, support immune function, and help reverse damage caused by kibble.**

1. Improved Digestive Health: Raw food is rich in enzymes and moisture, making it much easier for dogs to digest. Dogs fed a raw diet typically experience firmer stools, fewer digestive issues like gas and bloating, and better nutrient absorption. This is because the food is in its natural state, containing all the nutrients, vitamins, and minerals dogs need without synthetic additives.
2. Enhanced Immune System: A raw diet is packed with naturally occurring vitamins and minerals that support a strong immune system. The immune-boosting properties of raw foods help dogs fight off infections, inflammation, and even allergies. Over time, dogs fed a raw diet often see improvements in conditions like skin allergies, ear infections, and chronic inflammation.

3. **Healthier Skin and Coat:** Raw diets contain high levels of natural fats, including essential Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids, which promote healthy skin and a shiny coat. Dogs fed raw food often experience significant improvements in their coat quality, reduced shedding, and fewer skin problems. Their skin becomes more hydrated, reducing itchiness and hotspots.
4. **Better Dental Health:** Chewing raw bones naturally helps clean dogs' teeth and massage their gums, reducing the risk of plaque buildup, gum disease, and tooth decay. In contrast, kibble often contributes to tartar formation and dental issues due to its starchy content.
5. **Increased Energy and Vitality:** Many dog owners report that their dogs have more energy, stamina, and vitality after switching to a raw diet. The nutrient-dense food provides dogs with sustained energy, while the absence of artificial additives and fillers reduces lethargy and helps them maintain a healthy weight.
6. **Reverses Kibble-Related Issues:** Dogs that suffer from chronic health issues caused by kibble—such as obesity, arthritis, or food sensitivities—often experience dramatic improvements after transitioning to a raw diet. The elimination of grains, fillers, and toxins helps reduce inflammation, improve mobility, and heal digestive problems.

#### Approaches to Raw Feeding: PMR vs. BARF

There are two primary approaches to raw feeding: the Prey Model Raw (PMR) diet and the Biologically Appropriate Raw Food (BARF) diet. Both provide balanced nutrition but take slightly different approaches to achieving it.

1. **Prey Model Raw (PMR):** The PMR diet is designed to mimic the natural prey that wild canines would eat. It consists entirely of animal-based ingredients with no plant matter, emphasizing:
  - 80% muscle meat
  - 10% edible bone
  - 10% organ meat (half of which should be liver)
2. PMR is favored by those who believe dogs are obligate carnivores and do not require fruits or vegetables in their diet. The goal is to feed dogs in a way that closely replicates their ancestors' eating habits.
3. **Biologically Appropriate Raw Food (BARF):** The BARF diet takes a more balanced approach, including both animal-based foods and small amounts of plant matter such as fruits, vegetables, and supplements. A typical BARF meal may consist of:
  - 70% muscle meat and bones

- 10% organ meat
  - 20% fruits, vegetables, and other supplements like kelp or flaxseed oil
4. BARF proponents believe that wild dogs occasionally consume plant matter, whether in the stomachs of prey or foraged independently. This diet is designed to provide a more balanced nutrient profile for dogs that may benefit from some carbohydrates and plant-based nutrients.

## **Why Dogs Are Biologically Designed to Eat Raw Food and Bones**

Dogs, as descendants of wolves, are biologically designed to consume and digest a raw food diet that includes meat, bones, and organ tissue. Their anatomy and physiology clearly reflect this, from their sharp teeth and powerful jaws to their short digestive tracts, all of which are optimized for processing raw animal-based foods. Understanding how dogs are built to thrive on raw food and bones—and why kibble is not aligned with their natural diet—is essential for ensuring their long-term health and well-being.

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## **Dogs Are Carnivores: Evolutionary Evidence**

Though often labeled as omnivores, dogs are actually facultative carnivores, meaning their biology is primarily suited to eating meat, though they can tolerate some plant matter. Their wild ancestors, such as wolves, relied heavily on animal prey, consuming raw meat, bones, and organs. This legacy has carried over to modern dogs, whose anatomy is finely tuned to a carnivorous diet.

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## **The Design of a Dog's Teeth and Jaws**

### **1. Sharp Teeth for Tearing Meat**

- Canine teeth: Dogs have sharp, pointed canine teeth that are designed to rip and tear through the flesh of prey animals.
- Premolars and molars: Their premolars and molars are sharp and serrated, meant for crushing and slicing meat and bones rather than grinding plant material, which is what flat molars in herbivores or omnivores would do.

### **2. Jaws Made for Crushing Bones**

- Jaw strength: Dogs have strong jaws capable of exerting significant pressure, which enables them to crush bones and access the marrow inside. This is a

behavior observed in wild canines, who chew on bones to gain essential nutrients like calcium and phosphorus.

- Vertical jaw movement: Unlike herbivores, which have jaws that move from side to side to grind plant material, a dog's jaw moves up and down in a vertical motion. This design is perfect for tearing and shearing meat but inefficient for grinding kibble.
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## **Digestive System Designed for Raw Food**

### **1. Short Digestive Tract**

- Quick digestion: Dogs have a short, simple digestive tract, designed to process animal protein quickly. This allows them to efficiently absorb nutrients from raw meat and bones without the food lingering in their system for too long, which reduces the risk of bacterial overgrowth. This system is poorly suited for the long breakdown process required for carbohydrate-rich kibble.

### **2. High Stomach Acidity**

- Powerful stomach acid: Dogs produce highly acidic stomach acid (with a pH around 1-2), which is much more acidic than that of humans. This strong acid helps them break down raw meat and bones efficiently, while also killing harmful bacteria like salmonella and E. coli, which are often a concern with raw diets for humans but not for dogs.

### **3. Enzymatic Adaptation**

- Enzymes for raw food: Dogs' bodies naturally produce enzymes that are ideal for digesting animal proteins and fats, as opposed to the starch-heavy carbohydrates found in kibble. Digesting raw bones provides dogs with vital nutrients such as calcium, phosphorus, and collagen, which contribute to healthy teeth, bones, and joints.
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## **Kibble: A Biologically Inappropriate Diet**

### **1. Teeth Are Not Designed to Eat Kibble**

- Flat molars in kibble-fed dogs: Kibble is processed, dry, and primarily carbohydrate-based, which forces dogs to grind food between their molars—something their teeth are not well-equipped to do. Over time, this can lead to dental problems such as plaque buildup, gum disease, and tooth decay.
- Lack of chewing engagement: Kibble does not require the tearing and chewing action that raw food does. As a result, dogs on kibble diets don't get the dental workout that chewing raw bones provides, leading to an increased risk of dental disease.

## **2. High in Carbohydrates**

- Mismatch with digestive capabilities: Kibble often contains grains, fillers, and carbohydrates, which are difficult for dogs to digest. Their bodies are designed to metabolize protein and fat efficiently, not carbohydrates. Excess carbs in a dog's diet can lead to weight gain, insulin resistance, and even chronic inflammation.

## **3. Lack of Vital Nutrients**

- Processing destroys nutrients: Kibble is heavily processed at high temperatures, which destroys many of the natural nutrients in the food. To compensate, manufacturers often add synthetic vitamins and minerals, but these are not absorbed as effectively by a dog's body as the nutrients in whole, raw foods. These synthetic vitamins place significant strain on the liver and kidneys, as the body identifies them as foreign substances, which increases the overall toxic burden on the system.

## **4. Chronic Dehydration from Kibble**

- Lack of moisture: Kibble is a dry food, with moisture content typically around 10% or less, whereas raw food consists of about 70-80% moisture. Since dogs evolved to derive a significant portion of their hydration from the food they eat, feeding dry kibble leaves dogs in a chronic state of dehydration.
- Impact on organs: Dogs fed kibble may not drink enough water to make up for the lack of moisture in their diet, putting strain on their kidneys and liver. This chronic dehydration can lead to long-term health issues such as kidney disease and urinary tract infections.
- Thirst isn't enough: Even if kibble-fed dogs drink more water, it often isn't enough to fully compensate for the water they would naturally obtain from a raw diet. Over time, this can weaken their overall health and reduce their ability to process nutrients effectively.

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## The Benefits of Raw Meat and Bones

### 1. Healthier Teeth and Gums

- Natural cleaning: Chewing raw bones naturally cleans a dog's teeth and massages their gums. The mechanical action of chewing raw, meaty bones helps prevent tartar buildup and improves overall dental health.

### 2. Nutrient Density

- Packed with nutrients: Raw food is nutrient-dense, providing dogs with essential proteins, fats, and enzymes. The bones in raw food offer an excellent source of calcium, phosphorus, and other essential nutrients that support bone health, joint health, and overall vitality.

### 3. Better Digestion and Weight Management

- Easier to digest: Dogs digest raw meat and bones more efficiently than kibble, leading to less gastrointestinal upset, smaller stools, and improved digestion. Because raw food aligns with their biological needs, it also helps maintain a healthy weight and reduces the risk of obesity.

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## Raw is Biologically Appropriate for Dogs

Dogs are biologically and evolutionarily designed to thrive on a diet that consists of raw meat, bones, and organ tissue. Their teeth, jaws, and digestive systems are all optimized for processing animal-based foods, while kibble—a carbohydrate-heavy, processed product—fails to meet their natural dietary needs. Moreover, kibble leaves dogs in a chronic state of dehydration, which can contribute to serious health issues over time. By

### **Conclusion: The Superior Choice for Canine Health**

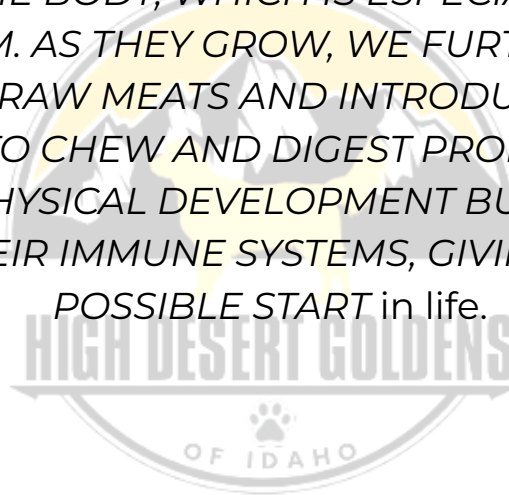
**Feeding your dog a kibble-based diet exposes them to unnecessary risks, from the toxins found in over processed ingredients to the lack of real nutrition. The long-term consumption of kibble can lead to chronic health issues, such as cancer, organ failure, dental disease, and skin problems.**

**By transitioning to a species-appropriate raw diet, you can significantly improve your dog's health, strengthen their immune system, and help them thrive.**

**Whether you choose the PMR or BARF approach, raw feeding provides dogs with the fresh, unprocessed nutrients they need to live healthier, more vibrant lives.**

*AT HIGH DESERT GOLDENS, ALL OF OUR DOGS THRIVE ON A 100% RAW DIET, WHICH PLAYS A CRUCIAL ROLE IN ENSURING THE HEALTH AND VITALITY OF BOTH PARENTS AND THEIR PUPPIES. ONCE THE PUPPIES REACH 3-4 WEEKS OF AGE, WE GRADUALLY INTRODUCE THEM TO RAW FOOD WHILE THEY ARE STILL NURSING. THIS EARLY EXPOSURE TO RAW NUTRITION PROVIDES THEM WITH A HEALTHY START AND SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEM.*

*BY WEANING THE PUPPIES ON RAW FOOD, WE ARE GIVING THEM THE BEST CHANCE TO BUILD A ROBUST IMMUNE SYSTEM, LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR A HEALTHIER LIFE. THE NUTRIENTS IN RAW FOOD ARE BIOAVAILABLE, MEANING THEY ARE EASILY ABSORBED AND UTILIZED BY THE BODY, WHICH IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR THE IMMUNE SYSTEM. AS THEY GROW, WE FURTHER DIVERSIFY THEIR DIET WITH MORE RAW MEATS AND INTRODUCE RAW BONES TO TEACH THEM HOW TO CHEW AND DIGEST PROPERLY. THIS NOT ONLY HELPS THEIR PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT BUT CONTINUES TO STRENGTHEN THEIR IMMUNE SYSTEMS, GIVING THEM THE BEST POSSIBLE START in life.*







### Side note:

Some argue that raw food isn't "safe" for dogs, but the reality is that raw diets are entirely appropriate for them. On the other hand, the assumption that kibble is a safer option is misleading. In fact, there have been numerous kibble recalls over the past few years, pointing to various safety concerns. Here are just a few examples of those recalls.

### 2023 Recalls

- **Victor Super Premium Dog Food** (October 2023) – Recalled due to potential salmonella contamination.
- **Primal Pet Foods** (March 2023) – Recalled for elevated levels of vitamin A in their Omega-3 supplements for dogs.

### 2022 Recalls

- **Spot and Tango** (September 2022) – Recalled due to salmonella contamination.
- **Freshpet** (June 2022) – Recalled for potential salmonella contamination in their small dog bite-size beef and egg recipe.

### 2021 Recalls

- **Sportmix, Nunn Better, and ProPac** (January 2021) – Recalled due to aflatoxin levels exceeding acceptable levels, leading to the deaths of over 130 dogs.
- **Fromm Four-Star Nutritionals** (October 2021) – Recalled due to elevated levels of vitamin D in their shredded entrée dog food.
- **Simply Nourish** (August 2021) – Frozen dog food recalled due to elevated levels of vitamin D.

### 2020 Recalls

- **Sportmix** (December 2020) – Recalled for elevated levels of aflatoxin.

