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Working With Your Vet



**Essential advice on
how to achieve the
best possible outcome**

Author: Dan Scott

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Essential Advice on How to
Achieve the Best Possible Outcome

By Dan Scott, Author of “Real Food for Dogs”



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Please print this report, curl up in a comfortable chair and read every word carefully, because THIS could transform your dog's life – it might even save it!

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Introduction



Once you have decided to take the raw food diet route so your dog can enjoy all the amazing benefits (see, In The Long Run). It's important for your faithful companion that you are able to work with your vet to prevent any health issues that may occur and regular screenings readily available will help prevent problems before they happen.

As you know with a raw fed dog, health issues will be rare unlike a dog on commercial dog food where you can expect a multitude of health complaints that whilst much overlooked early on will increase in severity as your dog gets older.

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This guide is about helping you work with your vet to achieve preventative care in line with your newly chosen natural feeding practice for the best possible outcome.

1. Feeding a Non Commercial Diet in a Commercial Diet World



"There is ample proof that today's dogs do not thrive on cheap, packaged, corn-based pet foods. Dogs are primarily meat eaters; to fill them up with grain-based processed dry foods that barely meet minimum daily nutrient requirements has proven to be a mistake." T.J. Dunn, DVM

Many wonder how to know what determines whether or not their dog should be on a natural raw diet. It can be quite helpful to ask the following questions:

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- Does your dog have yellow/tartar build up on his or her teeth?
- Does your dog have persistent allergy problems?
- Is there a "doggy smell" to your dog's coat or a greasy residue when rubbing your fingers through the coat?
- Are your dog's ears clean and odor free?
- Does your dog have bad gas?
- Does your dog excrete malodorous soft or runny stools?
- Is your doggy's breath sweet or foul?
- Does your dog exhibit skin problems, constant scratching, dry patches or excess shedding?
- Is your senior dog settling into arthritis?

- Does your dog suffer from hip dysplasia?
- Are you currently using insecticides, medicated shampoos, corticosteroids or flea collars?
- Have you ever had any problems with your dog's anal glands?
- Has your dog suffered from diabetes or any liver, kidney, colon or pancreas dysfunctions?
- Does your dog suffer from bladder stones, intestinal problems, urinary infections or diarrhea?
- Have you had a skin condition treated only to have one relapse after another?
- Is your dog overweight or even obese?
- Does your dog lack energy?



2. Making the Decision for a Raw Diet



When the decision is made to put your dog on a raw diet, you will be considered quite the lucky pet owner if your vet decides to support you in your decision. Practitioners of holistic vet medicine used to be far and few between; however, this is starting to change. Unfortunately for a good number of dog owners, going raw has meant the end of the road with a vet they have known for years. Nonetheless, the decision, if it is to be made, must be made

firmly and resolutely and pet owners will no doubt still need a vet from time to time. This means locating a vet that supports or at least respects your decision to feed a raw natural diet. Finding such an individual can be a task that takes some time; yet in the long run will be well worth the effort.

While the concept of feeding raw has not caught on with the majority of pet owners, it is definitely a notion that is picking up speed thanks to the pet food recall of 2007. Many have turned away from commercial dog foods in order to ensure they never experience losing a beloved companion in such a cruel way ever again. It was quite a shock to learn what a lucky few and pet food companies have known for years: commercial dog food is junk and it has been making our pets sick for seventy years. Pet food companies, like other engorged conglomerates, concern themselves with profits-despite their heartwarming advertisements that claim otherwise.

In 2013 pet food recalls are increasing with the potential for catastrophe ever present. As economic conditions force food prices up, the contents of commercial pet food drops with inferior ingredient quality and ignored regulations in the quest to maintain profits.

Once you learn that you have been feeding your most favorite friend a diet comprised of rejected grains, restaurant waste food, rancid commercial cooking oil, shop spoiled packaged food waste labeled unfit for human consumption, dead, disabled, diseased and dying animals from feed lots and a whole host of toxic cancer causing chemicals, it is hard to wonder why anyone would question your decision to chuck commercial foods. Of course, then you learn the real reason why veterinarians insist on referring to raw diets as dangerous and commercial pet food as safe.



3. The Common Conflict of Interest



Statistics from veterinary organizations and dog registries confirm that lifespans are now half what they were fifty years ago. (Bell, Kristen Lee, Holistic Aromatherapy for Animals, 2002, p.VIII)

If everyone was truly aware what pet food was comprised of, why it hurts dogs and why they should avoid it, pet food companies could very likely go under. This is why they spend not only millions of dollars on advertising, marketing, in addition to research and development, they also fund various veterinary organizations worldwide. With pet food companies sponsoring so many schools and programs, could it be any wonder why it is that student vets spend so little time on nutrition during their seven years of study? Could it be held suspicious that what classes and seminars are offered are prepared and taught by dog food companies themselves?

If this is all most veterinarians know about canine nutrition and few ever go out to do their own independent studies on the subject, how can they offer a balanced opinion on feeding issues at all?

It is not unheard for a dog owner to meet with not only resistance but downright hostility at the mention of feeding a raw diet to their dog. As the vast majority of the population is raised to respect and heed the opinions of professionals, it can seem fairly daunting to go against the norm. However, this is a case where the dog owner is the ultimate decider and the chooser. He or she must be the one who is responsible

for their dog everyday. The right decisions must be made for the beings that are relying on their guardian's best judgment to give them the most excellent life possible.

There is no doubt as to the valuable service that veterinarians provide. Yet, the bond between you and your dog should not be trumped by an individual who, even with a thorough respect for animals, cannot be bothered to value the human who stands before them- or their right to choose. Sometimes, the choice must be made when a dog has been chronically ill and nothing in traditional medicine has been able to help. In these cases, a dog owner should always have a choice to help their friend in any way possible, regardless of convention.



4. Considering Your Options



"There is virtually no information on the bioavailability of nutrients ... in many of the dietary ingredients used in pet foods. These ingredients are generally byproducts of the meat, poultry and fishing industries, with the potential for a wide variation in nutrient composition. Claims of ... the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) ... do not give assurances of nutritional adequacy ..."

James Morris, Quinton Rogers, Dept. of Molecular Biosciences, University of California at Davis Veterinary School of Medicine

If you are a pet owner who decides to feed raw from puppyhood, you may be able to skip possible conflicts by first and foremost locating a holistic practitioner online. Sometimes, it is possible to find a homeopathic vet by visiting websites and online organizations that advocate raw feeding. Even if there are no options nearby, you may still be able to find a recommendation for a veterinarian that does not advocate raw diets but will not disrespect those who practice them. Sometimes, this can be the best option in areas where holistic medicine is still a foreign concept. In worst case scenarios, a best bet may be lying by omission until a decent opportunity for a homeopathic vet opens up.

A small percentage of individuals opt for a homeopathic vet miles away, yet use a traditional vet in the immediate area for any emergency needs. For most dogs that live on a raw diet, trips to the vet are far and few between anyway. In emergency situations, a

traditional vet may be able to stabilize a dog just enough until it can see its primary holistic care provider.

Then there is the option of just working with the vet you have. For many it is the only option.



5. How to Stand Your Ground



Nearly 50 percent of natural deaths in older dogs are attributed to cancer. (Morris Animal Foundation Study, January 25, 2005)

You are well aware that the decision to feed your dog a raw diet will likely prompt a strong reaction. Standing your ground will be best accomplished by getting a true understanding of the opposing viewpoint and what it is based on. Certain issues become much clearer when you know the influence the pet food industry has on veterinary organizations.

The first thing you must understand is that the curriculum of a veterinary program primarily teaches vets to care for human food sources and keep them fit for consumption. These food sources include cattle, pigs, chickens and other herbivores. It does not include cats or dogs. Therefore, there is very little in the way of serious information for dealing with sick cats and dogs. Even though there are millions of people who have, love and greatly depend on their furry friends as part of their lives, pets do not necessarily weigh in in a strategic economic or fiscal manner and are ultimately considered inconsequential.

With no education on keeping pets healthy, what amount of training on feeding and nutrition for canines is a veterinarian likely to have? In the luckiest of situations, some vets will further their education on the subject but are truly under no requirement to do so. However, it

should be noted that the average veterinarian is overwhelmed with a great deal of information from all sides.

This includes commercial propaganda, government guidelines, veterinary medical journals, material from the veterinary associations and organizations they belong to and even conventions, classes and seminars they attend to keep their licenses current. Unfortunately, with the pet food industry behind a lot of the facts and figures, it is highly unlikely that any of these venues create a focus on feeding raw diets.

Constantly overwhelming people with misinformation until it becomes fact has long been in use throughout history. With these types of tactics, it is quite easy to see how a vet might be swayed on a subject before ever getting a chance to see the other side of the argument. Knowing all this, you should not feel that your vet will have any super secret information on the subject of raw feeding that you do not.

It is perfectly okay to ask your vet about the amount of time he or she has spent studying the subject of raw feeding. If little or no attention has been given to the matter, there is no way a well rounded, fair assessment on raw diets can be offered. Imagine being asked for the best route through a town you've only been to once. Can knowing how to drive a car necessarily make you an expert on the subject?

6. Peer Pressure



"Modern man has modified a number of characteristics of the canine. But there's one thing man has not altered... the basic nutrient requirements of the dog." T.J. Dunn DVM

You would think once you graduate high school the pressure to conform would be a thing of the past. In the veterinary field, those who are licensed to practice belong to associations and unions that can cite an infraction, impose heavy fines and even pull a practitioner's license. Therefore, even if a vet has done his or her fair share of research and finds that a raw diet does have its merits, openly advocating such an idea could put them in low regard in their community. It is not unheard of for an individual to be pushed to the outside until he or she is quite literally pushed out of the right to practice.

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For the many that go into veterinary medicine, merely the thought of losing the right to practice is devastating. It is the type of profession that fosters a deep connection to self identity. The vast majority who practice veterinary medicine do so because they have an honest desire to help animals. It means everything to them. Rarely does anyone realize the position they will be put in upon entering veterinarian school.

There have been a number of cases in which veterinarians were levied serious penalties for:

- Being associated with alternative medicine, its practitioners or making public their personal findings on alternative practices
- Speaking out about vaccinations or refusing to provide unnecessary vaccinations
- Collaborating with studies that counter traditional or conventional ideas and practices
- Questioning the conflicts of interest between dog food companies and association regulators

If the veterinary community is so certain that they have all the answers, why would they worry whether or not people looked elsewhere for additional knowledge? Aren't the deterrents to keep members from forming their own opinions- threatening them with their very jobs- a little harsh? If the true concern is for the welfare of animals, shouldn't any opportunity for new information be embraced?

Could it be that there are issues that need to stay buried for the sake of profit?

It may also help to know that those who lose their licenses to practice have no recourse other than legal action in a court of law. Such an endeavor can take years. The individual, in the meantime, will have to find a different career or means of viable income. Many literally cannot afford to take this risk.

It is not just the everyday average practitioner that has something to fear. A number of well known and respected veterinary practitioners have been ousted for speaking out against certain traditional practices. For example, because of the information it contained, Klaus Dieter Kemmerer's groundbreaking book on hip dysplasia was banned from publishing in Germany thanks to the work and deep pockets of pet food companies. The Australian Veterinary Association expelled the respected Tom Lonsdale for openly questioning the organization's links to the pet food industry as well.



7. Paying to Play the Devil's Advocate



Colgate-Palmolive, the company that manufactures Hill's Science Diet, spends "hundreds of thousands of dollars a year funding university research and nutrition courses at every one of the 27 US veterinary colleges. Once in practice, vets who sell Science Diet and other premium foods directly pocket profits of as much as 40%" (Parker-Pope, T. 1997. For You, My Pet, The Wall Street Journal. 3 November 1997)

Pet food companies can sell much more of their product when they have a body of veterinarians standing behind it. Yet, how much concern should there be when these same veterinarians also sit in the seats that make all the decisions for veterinary associations? Like product placement in movies and television, it is no secret that dog food companies spend a great deal of money to get their products promoted by the right people in the right places.

A number of veterinarian associations have entered contracts with dog food companies for lucrative sums. With such well paid deals, it is highly unlikely the decision makers will bite the hand that doles out the cash any time soon.

When the decision is made by a veterinary association to support a certain brand of food, there is no going against that decision for the individuals who belong to that organization. This is because the vast majority of their programs and activities are now supported with

proceeds from a company that feeds your pets the junk food that makes them sick. It is a sad cycle wherein the consumer believes they are doing their pet good by feeding a veterinarian backed formula; but has no idea that the veterinarian is in fact being paid to promote the product and has no formal training in canine nutrition.

At any rate, the junk food also proves profitable for veterinarians as sick pets continuously revolve in and out of their examination rooms and charges and fees for their services continue to skyrocket.



8. The Rock and the Hard Place



"We are seeing disease conditions in animals that we did not see years ago. Many of these may be traced to nutrition as the source..."
Don E. Lundholm, DVM

There are millions of veterinarians in the world and it is hardly reasonable to believe that each has ulterior motives. The vast majority are honest and sincere in their efforts to provide the best care possible to every single one of their patients. Yet it is difficult to believe that, with seven years of education, only a few have been able to figure out the real connection between commercial diets and disease in the canine species.

Even if they have ulterior motive or not, they have chosen to remain silent while millions of our beloved friends suffer.

Is it wholly deliberate?

What it is being stuck between a rock and a hard place. Being a veterinarian of course requires passion- but passion doesn't pay the bills. A practice is a business and it is an area where the bottom line matters. If expenses are not paid in a timely manner, there is no practice in which to practice. For all else, it is the bread and butter on which a vet supports him or herself and likely a family. If the association a vet belongs to has made the decision to back a certain brand of dog food and the vet is regularly paid a percentage for the promotion and sale of that product, what is their alternative?

Remember, penalties have been assessed and licenses have been lost for 'going against the grain'.

The very real aspect is that a vet is also running a business and, unfortunately, a business no matter what the industry is an unforgiving wilderness where you're damned if you do and damned if you don't.

Think of it this way:

- A pet food company's influence in a regulatory organization
- The constant misinformation and promotion of chemical laden dog foods
- Keeping pets at the bottom of the list and off the radar of importance
- Steering vets away from learning to help sick pets or anything to do with canine nutrition
- Applying exorbitant medical fees
- Threatening veterinary practitioners with their jobs for forming their own opinions

It is the only way to keep the money rolling in.

Your dog is considered property under the context of the law. His or her suffering is not recognized and cannot be recompensed. The pet food companies have all their bases covered.

Imagine if the opposite happened:

- Pet food companies were no longer allowed to fund or influence veterinary organizations
- Vet school curriculums included how to keep a cat and dog healthy
- Veterinary curriculums included heavy courses on nutrition
- Pet food companies had to include a complete and balanced accounting of their studies on their own products
- Allowing practitioners to speak freely of their observations, knowing that the public often heeds and respects the recommendations of trained professionals
- The all out approval of raw diets and their healing aspects

With a number of well pets running around on a raw diet, what exactly would be the source of income for the pet food industry? It is likely there would still be a veterinary industry; however, how will anyone be able to still charge the sky high fees for animals that rarely need to go to the vet?

How will the rich keep getting richer?

As you can see, it serves no purpose to do any of these things when profit is the bottom line. Your vet is simply stuck in the firing line right along with your pet. Even if you do not see eye to eye with your vet, you will have to appreciate his or her issue in the paradox of it all.

Knowing a large part of where the pet food industry, your vet, your dog and you play a role in the machine will make it much easier for

you to stand your ground with the decision to feed a raw diet. It is not something to take personally when you meet up with opposition to your choice.

It is merely the fear of an industry at being found out.



9. Pointing Fingers

Since 1997, veterinarians have been hiking prices at more than twice the rate of inflation.



It is said that it takes two to tango and the truth is you likely have played your own misguided role in the scheme of things. Though it can be hard to swallow, the reality is preventative medicine can be the best medicine and there are many vets that will offer this to dog owners. Regular tests on antibodies, stool, organ function and a host of other screenings are readily available. However, as with many other aspects of life, the average person will wait until the roof is falling down on their head before taking control of a situation. Just the same, many wait until their pet is sick to worry about their dog's health. A simple screening here or there can often stop a problem way before it starts. Yet many dog owners do not want to be bothered- largely because of the cost.

On one hand, it is true there are expensive vet fees. On the other hand, stopping a health issue before it starts can mean skipping a barrage of costly treatments and medications down the line. With these options available, pointing the finger over high vet bills means there are still three fingers pointing back at the finger pointer.

Working with your vet means meeting in the middle and preventative care is an honest and ethical way for a vet to ensure your pet's health.

10. Staying In the Know



"...When I began to suggest the feeding of raw meat, I found animals becoming more healthy even without other treatment. Indeed, I have frequently had the report that people find their animals become healthy when they make this change and diseases for which they were hoping to have treatment (on a waiting list) have disappeared." Dr. Richard Pitcairn, DVM

If you think about it, there was probably a time when you yourself had to go to a doctor for a health issue but were then referred to a specialist. Perhaps it was a podiatrist or a cardiologist; but it was likely someone who had a special level of expertise in the area you needed help with.

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Even though your regular doctor is a knowledgeable individual, he or she likely knew that your health problem was not an issue that he or she had enough specific knowledge to be of any help. The right thing to do was to refer you to someone who did. However, when it comes to your dog, a vet will sometimes insist he or she is ultimately the expert on your dog's health and nutrition because of training and/or experience.

It is said that the intelligent person is not the one who knows everything but the one who knows what they don't know.

What you must know without a doubt is that your vet cannot be your vet anymore if he or she is not able, cannot or is unwilling to explain your options fully to your satisfaction. The main reason you have come to your vet is to help your pet in times of need and if your dog has options, you need to know about them- all of them. If your vet insists on being the absolute expert on your dog's nutrition without having any training on the issue or having consulted someone who knows about it, it may be time to move on.

This hardly needs to be a battle of wills as much as it does a need to be about getting your dog the right care with the right person. As the prime decision maker for your dog, you have come to be advised so that your canine friend can live a healthier life. If a vet wants to be the prime decision maker, it will need to be with his own dog.



11. Returning the Balance of Influence



"In the wild, no one cooks for the coyote or wolf; no one brushes their teeth. Their foods are raw and unprocessed." William Pollak D.V.M.

As you can see, working with your vet largely requires you to take back the power you may have previously given up. Between you and your vet, your common interest should be to keep your faithful companion happy and healthy by finding a way to compromise, even if you can't see eye to eye. While he or she has good education and experience to stand on, it is only for helping you make the best informed decisions possible.

Just because you do not have the title DVM behind your name does not mean you cannot research, learn and understand new issues that may affect your dog's health. You and your opinions are not lesser in value. Just because your vet does have the title DVM behind his or her name does not mean he or she will always have all of the answers. It's that simple.

That being said, at no time ever should confrontation with your vet be your goal. The objective is to work with your vet with a clear understanding of why he or she thinks feels and operates from certain standpoints. In fact, you may even find that your vet feels very much the way you do but has simply not come forward yet.

One of the best ways to win support from your vet is to, without a doubt, show the level of commitment you have to keeping your dog

well. A well cared for animal is one that has a conscientious owner and doesn't miss a beat when it comes to their dog. This type of person not only asks questions for their gain but will always answer their vet's questions openly. Every vet visit should be an open exchange of ideas between two people. After all, you both hold very important information about your dog, even if it is from different perspectives.

All procedures, screening, the ins and out of medications and other issues should be addressed to your satisfaction. With time, you will eventually gauge whether or not your vet will be supportive of your decision to feed your dog a raw diet and whether or not you can broach the topic.

If it seems that the topic does not seem to be going in the direction you thought it would, do not lose your ground by trying to explain away your decision. You are under no obligation to do so. Your veterinarian may wonder what your motive is; a short precise answer is all that is needed. Settling into a long winded justification puts you in the position of trying to win approval for your standpoint when you really don't need any. You made your decision. You stand by it. End of story.

12. Planning Ahead



IRI-tracked U.S. sales of frozen/refrigerated pet food show the category leaping 119% in 2007, to reach \$6 million. The category is expected to grow 23% over the next five years to reach sales of \$473.4 million by 2012. (Media

Post Communications, 2008)

When it comes to traditional diets, you likely already know that:

- Ninety percent of all disease in dogs is diet related
- Approximately 85% of dogs by age four will suffer from periodontal disease
- Half of all dogs over the age of ten will have developed cancer
- Cancer is the number one cause of death in dogs
- In the U.S. alone, twenty percent of dogs suffer from arthritis

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If you must, define your true feelings about why you have gone with a raw diet for your dog on paper and condense it down to five simple words. This may seem difficult at first but in the end you can come up with an answer for your vet that will allow you to keep your ground in the conversation. In the end you may come up with:

- It's the decision I've made.
- I want my dog healthy.
- My dog deserves the best.

- There is no other choice.
- Because I care about [your dog's name here].

Do not allow yourself to be pressed, moved or discouraged if your vet does not receive your answer well. Assure your doctor that if he or she has not had a great deal of experience with dogs on a raw diet that you will be perfectly happy to fill in the blanks.

Keep in mind who is paying for whose advice. The one paying for the advice is the one who asks the questions and gets explanations, not vice versa.

All in all, every situation is different and there is no telling which way things can go. You may find that what you thought would be difficult turns out to be anything but. This is because the average person dislikes confrontation and would rather compromise than contribute their energy to conflict. If you're lucky, it could be your vet will be quite interested in having a dog that is kept on a raw diet as a patient. It may even be that your vet will simply need some time to adjust to the idea. If you can work with your vet, do so. If you cannot, then you cannot.

13. When You and Your Vet Decide to Work Together



North American sales of raw/frozen pet foods experienced a compound annual growth rate of 38% between 2003 and 2007, reaching \$169 million. (Media Post Communications, 2008)

When you and your vet decide to work together, that is a victory for your dog. However, keep in mind that if your vet has not dealt with a dog on a raw diet before, you will have the honor of initiating him or her to the physiology of naturally fed dogs versus those on commercial diets.

As a toxic blend of dead and rendered animals in addition to grains, chemicals, preservatives and sweeteners, there is no doubt that commercial dog food will affect a dog differently than a diet of uncooked raw meat. The grains in dog food are carbohydrates and carbohydrates are what make up nearly three quarters of a commercial food diet. A diet of raw meat offers a very scant percentage at all. It would only be common sense that there will be some very different results when your vet runs the necessary screenings on your dog.

The most important thing to keep in mind is that even though your dog's tests may show abnormal levels, it is your dog's levels that are actually the norm. Since the vast majority of dogs eat a commercial diet, they will exhibit average levels now taken as 'normal'. Remember that pet food for dogs has only been around for sixty years. What were

the 'normal' levels when dogs thrived on raw meat and not grain based diets?

What your vet is likely to see is elevated levels of nitrogen due to returning to a naturally intended protein based diet. Your dog's physiology is perfectly equipped to handle this. Do not be surprised if your vet seems to insist there may be a problem with the kidneys. It is quite common for this to happen. Many other tests will be influenced as well; however, the main objective is to stay informed and help identify and understand supposed discrepancies. Diet is what makes for a healthy dog. Many dogs on a commercially prepared diet are anything but healthy and a raw fed dog should not be expected to meet unhealthy standards.

In most cases, a dog that is fed a raw diet will have scores and percentages that are nearly always higher than their commercial fed counterparts. The reason dogs on a commercial diet have lower scores is that their body is starved for the natural sustenance it was developed and programmed to thrive on. When these nutrients are put back into the system, a dog's body can finally operate on the levels it is supposed to.

Until your vet gets used to seeing your dog's levels, it is strongly recommended to take your dog in twice per year for screenings. This will help establish your own definition of normal for your dog. Then, in the circumstance that something truly is wrong with your faithful friend; your vet will be able to pinpoint a treatment right away.

14. Finding a Holistic Vet



When opting to feed your dog a raw diet, sometimes it is best to go with a holistically trained vet. Holistically trained vets treat their patients as a whole rather than a set of symptoms and this means having a good understanding of the effects of nutrition.

Finding a holistically trained vet can be as easy as going on line; however, keep in mind that some individuals claiming to be holistically trained vets are anything but. There are some practitioners that mix conventional treatments with natural treatments and some that use nothing but natural treatments.

Most holistic vets have specific modalities, or specialties, such as acupuncture or herbs. You will need to make extra sure the vet you choose not only has plenty of training but works with dogs and canine nutrition. Some holistic vets limit themselves to treating cats only, dogs only or birds only.

To make sure your dog is in good hands, be certain that your vet is fully accredited by legitimate organizations such as the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association or a similar regional venue. These organizations not only have listings of holistic vets but those who keep a traditional practice and are open to caring for dogs on raw diets. Holistic vets may also list themselves with the National Center for Homeopathy. Many practitioners are located near larger cities but it is not unheard of for some to travel to see patients in neighboring counties.

15. Further Information

The following is a key of the abbreviated modalities holistic veterinarians can offer:

- AC- Acupuncture
- AC(IVAS)- Acupuncture (International Veterinary Acupuncture Society certified)
- Acuscope
- AK- Applied Kinesiology
- BF- Bach Flower Remedies
- BI- Biotron II
- CH- Chinese Herbs
- CR- Chiropractic
- CR (AVCA) Chiropractic- (American Veterinary Chiropractic Association certified)
- CN- Clinical Nutrition
- CT- Color Therapy
- CM- Conventional Medicine
- EAV- Electro acupuncture
- GT- Glandular Therapy
- H- Homeopathy
- HC- Homeopathy Classical
- HC(AVH)- Homeopathy (Academy of Veterinary Homeopathy Certified)
- HO- Homeopathy Other
- HMTX- Homotoxicology
- IN- Interro
- NAET- Nambrudripad's Allergy Elimination Technique
- NU- Nutrition

- MT- Magnetic Therapy
- MA- Massage Therapy
- PMT- Pulsating Magnetic Therapy
- Reiki
- VOM- Veterinary Orthopedic Manipulation
- WH- Western Herbs



17. Questions to Consider When Choosing a New Vet, Holistic or Otherwise

Whether opting for a holistic or traditional veterinarian, it is never a good idea to simply go with the first name that pops up. As health is an important issue, you certainly do not want to hand your dog's care off to just anyone.

The following is a list of questions to consider when on the hunt for a new veterinarian of any kind:

What type of services does this holistic/traditional vet offer?

Some vets set up a lone practice while others choose group practices. This is strictly a matter of preference for a dog owner. Each has pro's and cons, such as the possibility of not seeing the same doctor when going to a group practice. On the other hand, they may offer better hours. Vets in a lone practice may be harder to get an appointment with and have less time to spend with you and your pet during a visit. Then again, if he or she is really good, waiting for an appointment can be quite worth it for your dog.

Is this vet aware of raw food diets? If not, is he or she even open to such a concept?

You will no doubt want an experienced holistic vet on nutrition, especially if you are new to raw feeding. However, in situations where this is not an option, you will need to at least find a traditional vet that is familiar or comfortable with the idea of raw diets.

Does this holistic/traditional vet offer full services such as a surgery suite, an onsite lab or twenty four hour emergency services?

If not, getting test results may take longer and there may be extra processing charges in addition to vet fees for tests and analyses. Because accidents do happen at all hours, make sure you know who to contact for emergency services, if they are offered.

Is the facility in good condition?

Is the facility well lit, clean and welcoming? Do the receptionist, the vet and the assistants seem to enjoy their work?

Is the fee schedule readily available?

Avoid veterinarians that are not clear on their costs and fees. A good veterinarian understands that you know what you can and can't afford. Clearly stating costs and fees protects both you and the veterinarian from disputes.

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Does the vet communicate well with you and your dog?

In order for you to make the best decision possible for your dog, you will need to understand all the information available. A good vet will be more than happy to explain terms, options, test results and all other concepts to your satisfaction. Avoid a veterinarian that seems rushed, bored, confusing, condescending or just plain unpleasant. He or she has probably grown out of the profession and will likely have little concern about your dog's health and well being.

Most importantly, does your dog like your vet?

There are many dogs that just don't enjoy a trip to the vet but are often willing to cope. However, dogs are excellent judges of character and if your dog does not seem to get along with the vet you have chosen, there is likely a good reason why. Do give your dog time to adjust; but if he or she seems overly hostile or overly fearful, consider choosing another vet.



18. In the Long Run

The adage 'you are what you eat' applies to our canine companions just as it applies to us. For dogs, a natural diet works as food and medicine, restoring, repairing, rebalancing and returning its systems back to its original factory default settings. That is why feeding a dog the natural diet it was intended to thrive on provides such a healing benefit.

Those who give their dog a natural raw diet have the benefit of:

- Reducing their overall vet costs by 85%
- Reducing their obese dog's weight in weeks
- Cutting down on their food bill while boosting their dog's health
- Giving their dog an average age of 18 years of full health
- Strengthening their dogs immune system to stratospheric levels
- Giving their dogs a soft, shiny, clean smelling coat
- Exhibiting massive reserves of balanced energy
- Healing damaged internal organs
- The end of itchy skin, hot spots, inflammations, dermatitis, mange and other painfully worrying skin conditions
- A house free of doggy smell
- The end of phobic behaviors such as aggression, moodiness, anxiety and fearful behavior
- A calmer, happier dog