



NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2008

PICKING THE RIGHT BREED FOR YOU

According to Shelley Hunter, a dog trainer, the following information may help you pick the appropriate breed of dog that suits your lifestyle:

1. Watchdogs – German shepherd, Leonberger
2. Non watchdogs – Alaskan malamutes, Labrador retrievers
3. Long distance running companions – German short-haired pointer, Weimaraner, Dalmation
4. Not recommended for long distance running – Daschunds(legs are too short to keep up), Pugs, Bulldogs (their short noses can't pull in enough oxygen to cool them down when overheated)
5. Cuddly dogs – Greyhound, Basset hound, Newfoundland (if you have a big lap or couch)
6. Dogs that need their own space – Jack Russell terriers, Akitas, Chows
7. Cramped quarters – Bichon Frise, Papillon, Bull Dogs, Basset Hounds
8. Not for cramped quarters – Mastiffs, Great Danes
9. Allergy free breeds – Poodles, Wheaten terriers, Portuguese water dogs, schnauzers
10. Not allergy free – Golden Retrievers, Siberian Huskies, Collies
11. Dogs that need frequent grooming – Old English sheepdogs, collies
12. Low maintenance hair care – Dobermans, smooth coated Chihuahua, Mexican hairless

According to another article in Pet Product News, those looking for a breed of cat that is independent, quiet and aloof should not choose a Siamese cat. Siamese are well known for their interaction with their human companions, liking to chat (the more you talk, the more they will talk back) and their need to be with their humans

and “help” with tasks. Similar in personality are Burmese cats who also like to interact and are active and often vocal.

TOP TEN BREEDS REGISTERED IN CANADA

The most popular breeds in Canada were listed as Labrador retriever, Golden retriever, German shepherd, Poodle, Shetland sheepdog, Yorkshire terrier, Miniature schnauzer, Boxer, Shih Tzu and Beagles.

CATS & KIDNEY DISEASE

Because cats were designed to live in deserts where water is scarce, a lack of the need for drinking water is genetically programmed into our cats according to a recent article in Animal Magazine. Desert cats would get their fluid from their prey.

Because our cats are not eating their natural diet, and often being fed dry food, this puts a lot of stress on the kidneys because of a state of chronic dehydration. This is putting our cats at risk for kidney disease at an early age (as young as a few months according to this article).

Vaccinations have a direct link to kidney disease according to studies done at the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine and Colorado State University College of Veterinary Medicine. It was agreed that vaccines, chemicals and drugs in general make the urinary system more susceptible to inflammation and disease.

Because animals can exist on 75% lost kidney function, it is often very advanced by the time our cats show signs & symptoms.

Dr. Mark Newkirk, a veterinarian using conventional and alternative therapies, says that natural medicine is the best way to treat kidney disease. He uses drugs & fluids if needed, but prefers to use natural therapies. Dr Newkirk disagrees with low protein diets because the cats often don't like them and won't eat them. At this point he believes in feeding them a very high quality diet regardless of the protein level.

HEARTWORM DISEASE & MEDICATION

It will soon be that time of year to get your dog's blood test done to check for heartworm. A negative blood test is mandatory before giving any of the heartworm preventatives. Giving a heartworm drug to a dog with a positive test can have serious negative effects, including death.

Dr. Pitcairn DVM states in his book “Natural Health for Dogs & Cats” that the drugs used to prevent & treat heartworm can have side effects that include headache, fatigue, weakness, joint pain, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting.

Dr. Pitcairn feels that a good natural diet with liberal amounts of garlic (new evidence indicates that garlic may be toxic to dogs, but is inconclusive) combined with brewer's yeast is protective against heartworm.

He believes that dogs with a few heartworms can be conservatively treated with non-toxic medications (diuretics and heart tonics) rather than with very strong heartworm drugs (arsenic compounds).

Dr. Martin Goldstein states that only a small percentage of dogs who have heartworm will die of it. He believes that toxicity from heartworm medications is responsible for a tremendous amount of immune suppression leading to liver problems and cancer in dogs.

Dr. Goldstein no longer gives dogs heartworm preventatives and of the handful of heartworm cases he has seen, he has treated the majority of them successfully with herbal remedies including hawthorn and black walnut.

TOP TEN LIES ABOUT PET NUTRITION

According to the 2007 Pet Food Report, these are the top ten non-truths we have been told by the pet food industry:

Table scraps are bad for pets – if it's good food for you, with some exceptions (onions, raisins, grapes and in some cases swiss chard, spinach, peppers & eggplant), it is good for your pet. Leftovers like plain steamed vegetables, eggs, lean meat, rice, etc. will complement your pet's diet. Things to avoid are cooked bones, rich sauces & gravies and sweets.

Dry kibble and treats clean the teeth – in fact the opposite is true. Dry kibble and treats can actually contribute to dental problems. Food such as meat, raw bones and vegetables that contain enzymes will help to prevent and remove tartar.

Raw meat makes your pet aggressive – aggression is a behavioral issue and is not caused by raw meat. Our pets in the wild would survive on raw meat, grasses, etc. Sticking to one food is best – feeding the same food, or flavour of food repetitively can cause boredom and food sensitivities. Rotate the protein sources you give your pets to avoid these problems, but make sure you are using the highest quality food you can find.

If it's at the vet clinic, it must be good – prescription foods are made by large commercial companies with profit, not nutrition, in mind.

All bones are dangerous – cooking bones makes them brittle and prone to splintering in your pet's digestive tract. Raw bones however are helpful for keeping teeth & gums healthy.

Semi-moist food is like meat – the “junk food” of the pet food industry contains mostly artificial ingredients and not much that is real. Semi-moist food contain sugar, artificial colours, artificial flavours and preservatives to keep them soft.

Pets should have food down 24 hours a day – free feeding is the major cause of obesity, finicky appetites and has also been linked to immune system weakness. Feeding small meals twice daily for adult dogs encourages good digestion and hunger for the next meal.

Cheap food saves money – in fact, because of the poor quality ingredients & high amounts of fractionated grains (leftovers from human food processing plants), your pet will eat more of an “economy” food than a super premium food that contains high amounts of meat. In the long run, per serving costs of the cheaper food actually cost you more in food, clean-up time, and medical costs.

Raw diets will make my pet sick – think about what your pet would naturally eat in the wild and did so before pet foods were invented. Our dogs & cats have shorter, straighter digestive tracts with stronger digestive juices that can deal with some parasites & contaminants that would make us sick. However, if you are making your own food, ensure that the meat has been kept properly refrigerated.

In good health, Mike, Lee, Jayne & Moxy

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