



## NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2008

### FOOD & DIABETIC CATS

A research study from University of Missouri-Columbia summarized that the most important factor in cats developing diabetes is the amount of food served and the cat's weight.

Cats eating dry food tended to put on more weight (greater than 18-20% body fat) than cats fed wet food according to this study. Because obesity is directly linked with diabetes, the conclusion was that wet food may be better in the fight against diabetes than dry food.

### RABIES IN ONTARIO

According to a recent article "Is Rabies a threat in Ontario?" by Dr. Janice Huntingford, DVM, there have been 133 cases of rabies reported in Ontario since 1999. According to Lori MacNeil, public health inspector in Lambton County, there have been 5 rabies cases over the past 3 years – all in bats. An April newspaper article reported that Ontario is now "rabies free" which means there have been no reported cases in the past two years (seems conflicting with the Lambton statistics).

Under Ontario Regulation 567, rabies vaccination is required for all dogs & cats past three months and repeated every 1 - 3 years depending on the vaccine used.

Legally, a waiver for the rabies vaccine is allowed in some circumstances with a statement of exemption from the veterinarian for animals who have physical conditions that preclude vaccination or re-vaccination of the animal. The specifics of this exemption were not stated in the article.

### “OUR FOOD “ VS. “THEIR FOOD”

According to Dr. Shawn Messonnier, DVM, regardless of what medications, herbs, homeopathic remedies, vitamin supplements, or other treatments a pet is being given, unless they are eating a nutritious diet, the pet will never have optimum health. In the article “What do vets learn about nutrition? (Pet Food Report, 2007), Dr. Messonnier expressed his concerns about the lack of nutritional information that he was taught in veterinary school. Of the information that was presented, he found it very biased because it was presented by one of several pet food companies who were trying to promote their own product and also who were providing free food to the veterinary students.

He states that veterinarians coming out of school are usually biased towards one brand and are therefore “anti-natural” in their view of pet food.

Dr. Messonnier discusses the various “prescription diets”, and because they are made by the various pet food companies (Iams, Hills, Purina and Waltham) the quality is suspect. These foods often contain chemical additives, by-products and cheap plant products. He says that prescription diets are usually no better than non prescription diets when it comes to the quality of the ingredients. He feels that these foods do nothing to improve the health of animals, and in some case, actually contribute to illness.

We often hear “well, my vet said...” but the customer was usually not given any reasoning for the products or food they were expected to give their pets. It is important to understand what the food contains and why it is thought to be a better alternative to what you are presently feeding, regardless of whether you are buying it here or elsewhere.

We have chosen to sell the best products we can find with “approved for human consumption” meats, grains & vegetables guaranteed to be chemical free. We will not compromise or lower our standards.

### “OVERWEIGHT PETS REFLECT OWNER’S LIFESTYLE”

The following is taken from a newspaper article quoting Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald of Animal Planet’s “Emergency Vets”.

Dr. Fitzgerald says that a third of American pets are overweight and sadly are reflecting our sedentary lifestyles.

Some of his tips for healthy weight loss for your pets are:

1. use an 8 oz. measuring cup when doling out your pet’s food
2. put food down for 30 minutes twice daily and pick it up if not eaten in that time
3. break treats into two or three pieces (your pet will think they are getting 3 treats)

4. eliminate unhealthy treats like ice cream that you think your pet needs
5. play with your pets more to burn off calories, but start slowly if your pet has been sedentary

Putting your pet's food at the top or bottom of a staircase will encourage some exercise. You can do the same with a treat a few times a day.

Carrying excess weight affects the entire body – heart, joints, lungs, skin and your pet's life expectancy. It is up to us to make decisions for our pets regarding their nutrition, because as Dr. Fitzgerald says, it is not your dog or cat that operates the can opener or hands out the treats.

### ONE PET, ONE BOWL

If you have multiple pets, please give them each their own food bowl. Pets who must share a bowl can develop food aggression where the dominant pet gets the majority of the food and the submissive one gets very little. Unless you are watching your pets closely, you may not realize that this is happening. Just like with human children, our pets each deserve their own clean bowl.

In good health, Mike, Lee, Jayne & Moxey

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