

# Raw Meaty Bones for Dogs (and even Cats)

Raw, meaty bones can improve the health and well-being of your dog or cat! Many holistic veterinarians, including Ian Billinghurst, author of the popular books, Give Your Dog A Bone and The BARF Diet, advise feeding uncooked bony parts of chicken (such as necks, wings, and backs), turkey necks, beef knuckles, marrow bones, and lamb ribs as a significant part of your dog's diet. These meaty parts provide good nutrition, teeth cleaning, psychological well-being, and full body exercise.

If you've ever watched a dog (or a wolf or lion, for that matter) tear the meat from a bone, you'll see every muscle in the body working as the animal braces his prize with his paws while pulling the meat away with his teeth. Cats will tackle smaller bones such as chicken necks, whole quail, or game hen pieces with gusto. Anitra Frazier, author of The New Natural Cat, advises giving a whole neck in the bathtub to watch your cat stalk it before eating. Our little carnivores instinctively know how to crush, rip, and chew bones!

## Raw Bones Are Not Dangerous

We have been told so often that bones can splinter and cause internal damage that it is hard embrace the fact that bones are safe when given raw. Cooking a bone can cause it to become brittle and splinter, but raw bones are pliable and resilient, breaking off without sharp edges. Poultry bones are soft enough to be completely chewed up and digested. Harder bones, such as beef, lamb, or buffalo are considered recreational bones and are mainly for chewing, not eating. They have marrow, gristle, and connective tissue that contribute valuable nutrients and roughage.

## Raw Bones Are Nature's Toothbrushes

Dogs raised on raw bones have clean, white teeth that never need scaling, while those raised on commercial food alone frequently develop tartar, gum disease, infected mouths, and bad breath. Despite food companies' claim to the contrary, dry kibble does not clean teeth! Raw bones act like floss in the mouth, polishing and scraping away tartar as the animal crunches and gnaws. In addition, raw meat creates a somewhat acidic oral environment to retard plaque formation and freshen your pet's breath.

## Raw Bones Provide the Perfect Mineral Balance

A prey animal's bones contain minerals in the proper balance for a carnivore's growth and development. For eons, Nature's plan was that wild canines and felines obtain needed calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, and other minerals from consuming the bones of their prey, and that is still the preferred source. Bones contain the proper mineral balance, eliminating concern about oversupplementing any single mineral. If your dog consumes more bones than he needs, the excess is excreted in the stool. Don't be surprised by some chalky, crumbly stools -- this is normal.

## The Nutritional Value of Raw Bones

Besides contributing calcium and other minerals, raw bony parts provide essential fatty acids (poultry is higher than beef or lamb), fat-soluble vitamins, blood-forming factors found in the marrow, including iron and copper, cartilage and collagen (arthritis preventing), proteins and valuable amino acids, especially lysine. Meaty bones can constitute an entire meal, keeping in mind that vegetables and other foods should be consumed at other times.

## Ground Poultry Bones for Reluctant Animals

Some dogs and cats are not enthusiastic about bones, or have poor teeth and don't like to chew. For these animals, finely ground or hacked-up chicken backs, necks, or wings are a good substitute. Although they don't clean the teeth as well, they provide the same nutritional value, and can result in a gradual transition to larger pieces.

**Try our R.O.A.R. bones - Human quality raw beef knuckle bones, marrow bones, lamb bones, whole turkey necks, ground turkey necks, and ground chicken backs.**

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