



# NVH Pawprints

Newtown Veterinary  
Hospital

August 2006

## Food Allergy Myths By: Wendy C. Brooks DVM DipABVP [veterinarypartner.com](http://veterinarypartner.com)

There are a great deal of misconceptions when it comes to considering food allergy for pets. In this brief summary, we hope to bust a few myths and present an overview of the problem.

**MYTH:** "Food allergy ought to produce intestinal signs as it is the intestinal tract that is exposed to the allergen."

**FACT:** In pets, it is usually the skin that suffers with a food allergy. Food allergy is one of the itchiest conditions in veterinary dermatology. Making matters worse is the fact that food allergies tend to be resistant to cortisone therapies which makes itch control especially difficult.

**MYTH:** "Food allergy is a less likely cause of my pet's skin disease as we have been feeding the same food for years and the skin problem is a recent development."

**FACT:** It takes time to develop a food allergy, typically months to years. The immune system must be exposed and must develop enough antibodies to trigger an allergic reaction and this requires multiple exposures to the food in ques-

tion. A reaction to a food that occurs on the first exposure to that food is not an allergic reaction. Such reactions are called "food intolerances" and involve toxins within the food but not an allergic reaction.

**MYTH:** Soy and corn are common food allergens and it is best to seek pet foods without these ingredients to avoid problems"

**FACT:** The most common food allergens for dogs are: beef, dairy, and wheat. These three ingredients account for 68% of canine food allergies. The most common food allergens in cats are: beef, dairy, and fish. These three ingredients account for 80% of feline food allergies.

**MYTH:** "If it looks like my pet might have a food allergy, I should be able to manage the problem by switching to another diet."

**FACT:** Unfortunately for food allergic pets, most pet food diets contain some sort of mixture of beef, dairy, wheat, lamb, fish and chicken. This means that

simply changing foods is bound to lead to exposure to the same allergens. There are two ways to address food allergy: feeding a diet based on a truly novel protein source (this usually means an exotic diet like venison, duck, kangaroo, rabbit or even alligator) OR feeding a diet where the protein has been predigested into units too small to interest the immune system.

**MYTH:** "My pet got only partly better after the food trial so that means it didn't work."

**FACT:** Animals commonly have several allergies concurrently. A food allergy responding to a test diet at the same time an inhalant allergy is active will look like a partial response. On the other side of the coin, an inhalant allergy can become inactive should the weather change substantially during the diet trial. This would make a diet appear to be successful by coincidence. In order to determine if a response to a diet trial is real, at the end of the trial the patient is challenged with the original diet. If itching re-starts within feeding two weeks of the challenge, food allergy can be diagnosed.

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### Did You Know

- A young kangaroo is called a Joey
- The coyote's scientific name (*Canis Latrans*) means "barking dog"
- Flamingos eat with their heads upside down to strain the water out of their food
- The Artic Tern flies from the North Pole to the South Pole and then back again to spend summer in each place

## Feeding Your Puppy By: Hill's Pet Nutrition

Why the right start is so Important

The proof is in the pet food. And the food you choose to feed your puppy during the first year is critical to its adult development, health and growth. Feeding

a food that's nutritionally balanced without excesses or deficiencies helps avoid health problems. A food fortified with antioxidants helps maintain a healthy immune system, and contributes to vitality, good health and longevity. Feed-

ing the right food also helps your dog avoid nutrition-related health problems later in life.

There are many choices on the market. Ask your veterinarian which one they think is best for your puppy.

## 180 Amazing Cat Facts by: American Media Mini Mags, INC



- A domestic cat can run up to 30 mph
- Cats do not have a true collarbone - that's why they can squeeze into any opening big enough for their head
- Cat saliva is believed to contain a deodorizing and detergent-like substance that keeps kitty's fur clean
- Cats walk on their toes
- Cats communicate through sound, and a meow can mean many things. A low and demanding meow, for example, could be a complaint that dinner is late or the litter box is closed. But a meow that's short and sweet is probably an affectionate thank you for just being a friend.
- At the other end of this wide vocal range is that out-and-out yowl that grates on the ears and the nerves. It's a sound that gives a whole new meaning to the message, "I want it now!"
- There's the fighting screech, a sound that pierces the very soul. That high-pitched banshee wail is calculated to scare off any opponent - and set your neighbors' teeth on edge.
- The average cat is considered a senior citizen at age 10
- There are 500 million domestic cats in the world

## HSUS Top 12 Animal Stories of 2005 number 1

*"You can say any fool thing to a dog, and the dog will give you this look that says, 'My God, you're RIGHT! I NEVER would've thought of that!'" — Dave Barry*

1. Congress votes to ban horse slaughter. Unbeknownst to most Americans, tens of thousands of America's horses end up as meat on foreign tables. This year, both chambers of Congress overwhelmingly passed similar amendments to remove funding for Department of Agriculture inspections of slaughterhouses that process horses in 2006. When the amendment came under fire in conference committee, the

HSUS mobilized horse advocates, who flooded Congress with calls, prompting one congressman to remark that he received more calls about the horse issue than the Supreme Court nomination. The amendment stayed, but only for eight months of next year, instead of the expected 12. The HSUS is lobbying Congress to make the horse slaughter ban permanent.

The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's largest animal protection organization representing more than 9.5 million members and constituents. The HSUS protects all animals through education, investigation, litigation, legislation, advocacy, and fieldwork. The group is based in Washington and has numerous field representatives across the country. Copyright 2006 HSUS Dec2005

## Antioxidant Protection for Cats by Hills Pet Nutrition



- Vitamin E: One of the most versatile antioxidants, vitamin E helps support the body's healing process. It has also been shown to help prevent heart and neurological diseases. Vitamin E reduces the effects of aging.
- Beta-Carotene: Research suggests that carotenoids like beta-carotene help build a strong immune system and help in the fight against many diseases, including cancer and other serious illnesses.
- Vitamin C: Works to boost the power of vitamin E in the body to fight the damage caused by toxins and pollution. For this reason, vitamin C is used to help protect against cancer and other illnesses.
- Selenium: An essential trace mineral that works with vitamin E and helps create important enzymes. These enzyme systems help protect against cell damage. Selenium also works with other antioxidants in fighting cancer.

## Body Condition Score for Pets By: Hill's Pet Nutrition

Body Condition Scoring helps determine if a pet's growth rate and feeding procedures are correct. Proper growth and weight can help prevent obesity and growth-related skeletal disease.

### **IDEAL**

**Ribs:** Easily felt with slight fat cover

**Tail Base:** Smooth contour with slight fat cover

**Side View:** Abdominal tuck

**Overhead View:** Well-proportioned waist

### **OVERWEIGHT**

**Ribs:** Difficult to feel under moderate fat cover

**Tail Base:** Some thickening, bones palpable under moderate fat cover

**Side View:** No abdominal tuck

**Overhead View:** Back is slightly broadened at waist

### **OBESE**

**Ribs:** Difficult to feel under thick fat cover

**Tail Base:** Thickened and difficult to feel under thick fat cover

**Side View:** No waist, fat hangs from abdomen

**Overhead View:** Back is markedly broadened



## The AARK Foundation [www.aark.org](http://www.aark.org)

The AARK Foundation is NOT closing. They will be moving out of Newtown location November 1, 2006. Donations are needed at this time and if you'd like to send one please write relocation fund on your check. You can go to [www.aark.org](http://www.aark.org) for their mailing address.

The AARK is always in need of volunteers. Volunteer Orientation is held in March and the volunteer season runs from May to September. If

one is interested they can call the AARK in February at 215-968-4963. They also have intern programs for college and high school students.

Some general tips:

Do not touch any bird or animal with your bare hands - always use gloves.

Leave alone if possible, if not possible place the animal in a secure box in a warm, dark and quiet loca-

tion, away from children and other animals.

Do not attempt to feed the animal and do not offer water.

Get the animal to the AARK as soon as possible. Often their patients need to receive medications that are much more effective and which give the animal a much better chance of survival if they are administered soon after injury.

*"A beaver does not, as legend would have it, know which direction the tree will fall when he cuts it, but counts on alacrity to make up for lack of engineering expertise."*  
— Ann Zwinger

## Treats: The Good and the Bad By: Hill's Pet Nutrition

Whether it's for training purposes or just for fun, healthy treats are a great way to connect with your puppy.

Save treats for special occasions such as obedience practice or crate training. Give small pieces of treats to reinforce several commands instead of a whole treat to reward just one

command.

Teach your dog to earn every treat (and meal) with a "sit/stay" or a "down/stay"

**Definite Don'ts**

**Chocolate:** Can be poisonous for pets

**Onion:** Dangerous for pets and can cause anemia

**Dairy Products:** Cause diarrhea in lactose-intolerant dogs

**Bones (from meat, poultry and fish):** May splinter and stick in the throat or cut into the intestine. Bones can also break teeth

**Grapes and Raisins:** Can be associated with renal failure





## Newtown Veterinary Hospital

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### Wildlife Removal Services

Lenny's Wildlife Pest Control 215-579-0148  
Critter Control 215-283-0717  
Animal Management 215-529-5856  
Bucks County Wildlife Pest Control 215-752-8725

### Annual Pet Fair

**Saturday**  
**September 16, 2006**  
**10am to 4pm**

### Our four-legged friends who have passed away

Harley McCarthy, Bailey Turbyfill, Bubba Massey, Max, Caroselli, Hobbs Joyce, Heidi Young, Hailey MacElroy, Jordie Berman, P.D. Brown, Alex Campbell, Maggie Staffin, Kramer Dear, Sneakers Hornickle, Shadow Bliss, Skippy Wasserman, Bailey Shakt, Brandy Wozniak, George Mitchell, Coco Baigis, Scrubbs Yuskevitch, Inky Sohmer, Charger Wiederhold,



Bandit Sudac, Rosie Radner, Roxy Hynoski, Shamrock Burns, Zoie Valek, Nichole Wustholz, Sunny Serio, Bella and BoBo Pinzhoffer, Neno Morin, Bo Cadwallader, Boots Durning, Casey Freudenthal, Mia Kerner, Belly McLaughlin, Mimi Margolis, Precious Patterson, Riggs Useller  
They will be missed.

**Good Bye** to Amy Moyer - She was one of our Senior Technicians who at the end of July has moved away. We are going to miss her smiling face.

#### August Calendar

August 2nd Dr Summers' Birthday  
August 3rd Dr Rosenbloom's Birthday  
August 14th Erin leaves to start her student teaching (she'll work here on some Saturdays)  
August 25th Katie goes back to Penn State (we'll see her again at Christmas!)  
August 28th Veronica's Birthday

## The List of Ingredients By: Wendy C. Brooks DVM [veterinarypartner.com](http://veterinarypartner.com)

Everyone is familiar with a list of ingredients. We see these lists on the foods that we consume. Pet foods also have a list of ingredients with the most predominant components listed first according to their weight.

Each term on this list is specifically defined by the AAFCO (Association of American Feed Control Officials) and a catalog of definitions is available for all the terms that may be used on this list. One might think something like chicken does not really require a definition but, in fact, the AAFCO finds that it does.

Chicken: the clean combination of flesh and skin with or without accompanying bone, derived from the parts or whole carcasses of chicken or a combination thereof, exclusive of feathers, heads, feet and entrails.

Beef: the clean flesh derived from slaughtered cattle, and is limited to that part of the striate muscle which is skeletal or that which is found in the tongue, in the diaphragm, in the heart, or in the esophagus; with or without the accompanying and overlying fat and the portions of the skin, sinew, nerve and blood vessels which normally accompany the flesh.

This may seem bizarrely graphic but it is important to differentiate the main flesh of the meat source from the by-products (which are generally the organ meats) or meat meal (which is basically ground up meat) or meat digest (meat that has been treated with enzymes).

There has been an assortment of rumors regarding meat by products that suggest that these include hair,

feathers, hooves, or other poorly digestible tissues. It should be noted that these tissues are specifically excluded from the definition of by products by the AAFCO.

Another source of confusion in the ingredient list is the fact that the vitamins that fortify the pet food are listed by their biochemical names. This tends to make the list read like some sort of chemical textbook. Here is a handy guide for those unfamiliar with common supplements:

- Ferrous Sulfate: iron supplement
- Thiamin: Vitamin B1
- Niacin: Vitamin B3
- Alpha Tocopherol: Vitamin E
- Calcium Pantothenate: also called coenzyme A, an important metabolic cofactor
- Pyridoxine Hydrochloride: Vitamin B6
- Riboflavin: Vitamin B2

