



Crow River
Animal Hospital
& Dental Clinic

Friday Fun Facts – Number 9:2010

Melissa Shelton DVM – Whole Food Supplements The Basics for Pets

Disclaimer: All of the information provided here is intended for educational purposes. The information is not intended to diagnose, treat, or prescribe for any illness. Please seek the advice of a qualified health care professional in your area of concern if you or your pets have a health challenge.

Whole Food Supplements – what are they, and why do we need them?

All commercial pet food (and most human food for that matter) is processed, cooked, and extruded these days. This process destroys nutrients contained within the food. Most of us have been taught that eating a raw vegetable is healthier for you than a cooked or canned vegetable. When ingredients are added to pet food prior to making it into kibble, the pet food companies know that nutrients will be destroyed in the cooking process, so after the kibble is made – they spray more vitamins and minerals back onto the food. By doing this, if the regulatory companies were to check the guaranteed level of nutrients contained in the food – the levels would still be adequate.

This sprayed on “nutrient liquid” is composed of laboratory created synthetic vitamins. In nature, vitamins exist in complexes. Vitamin C has approximately 5 components to it. I say approximately, because as science discovers “new vitamins” – the fact is that these vitamins have been here the entire time – contained within REAL FOOD. We just haven’t discovered them yet. If you eat an orange or other Vitamin C containing food – you will get the entire Vitamin C complex – whether we have named a component or not. If you consume Vitamin C that is provided to you through a Centrum, or a synthetically created vitamin supplement – you are limited to what a laboratory has created and what science has said is important for you to have.

Do you remember a few years back, when all of a sudden Lutein became an important nutrient, and was “discovered” to be so good for so many things? I remember hearing vitamin commercials, “Centrum, NOW WITH LUTEIN....” Well, where was Lutein before it had a name? It was still in all natural, real, whole foods. It just wasn’t in Centrum (or any other vitamin for that matter). The interesting fact is that Standard Process has had a human supplement called Catalyn since 1929. Catalyn would be similar to what your multi-vitamin is trying to emulate, just in a whole food version. Shockingly, every time a “new” vitamin is discovered, Catalyn has been analyzed and found to already contain that “new” nutrient!!!

What happens when we don't receive the entire vitamin complex from a supplement? Unfortunately, nature's master plan is the conservation of what is normal or natural. Vitamin C wants to exist in a full and complete complex. When we take massive doses of only 1 or 2 of these synthetic parts, our body (and nature) wants to complete the complex. So, we will leach the other components out of our bones, muscle tissues, blood etc... to form a complete complex. This process essentially robs our body of the other parts of the complex, causing deficiencies and potential illness. The sad truth is, many of the vitamins that we are taking in an effort to get healthy and stay healthy, may actually be making us sicker.

Why can't we just get our nutrients from the foods we eat? Let's be honest here. Even people I meet (myself included) who eat mostly organic foods, and try to eat a balanced and healthful menu – do not have ideal diets. Add to this the fact that foods today do not even contain the same amount of vitamins, minerals or enzymes that they did 40 years ago. Our soils are depleted. Food is harvested before it is ripe. Even organic produce is shipped over thousands of miles to reach our plates. You can tell the distinct difference by comparing a vine ripened tomato grown in your own backyard, to a store bought tomato (even organic). There is just no comparison. A tomato ripened the way nature intended is still accumulating vitamins, minerals and enzymes as it is “connected to the plant and the earth”. There is no substitute for this.

So, pets and humans are just becoming more and more vitamin deficient. I believe that pets (and humans) are actually born deficient now. Especially with puppy mills and rescued pets, animals are starting out life, born to a malnourished mother. Then the cycle continues to worsen as we feed them commercial pet foods, with synthetic and non-complete vitamin complexes. Even in the best situation with top quality pet foods – the amount of nutrition to create a healthy litter and then nurse them to weaning; depletes the mother further of any extra vitamins, minerals and enzymes she had to spare.

Part of the theory of feeding pets raw diets addresses this problem. Raw whole foods contain natural and whole vitamin complexes, minerals and natural enzymes. However, since our foods do not contain ideal levels of nutrients any longer, we cannot rely on raw diets only to fix this problem. I often see pets on a raw diet, who are getting a human multi-vitamin to “complete their nutrition”. Not only is this synthetic vitamin a problem as stated above – but I have noticed a trend that most raw feeders, will pick the cheapest generic human multi-vitamin to supplement with. Kind of defeats the purpose of the diet! I will cover raw diets for pets in the future – but in my eyes, I see very few people who do a good job at feeding their pets this way.

Not only is basic nutrition important for daily life and function. But, nutrition is incredibly important in healing. Chronic ear infections, skin infections, surgical incisions etc... cannot heal without good nutrition. This is proven medical fact, and is extremely supported by even traditional medical research (even if doctors don't realize it). When recurrent problems continue to crop up after medications

have been stopped – this is a clear indication that the body does not have all of the tools necessary to heal itself. Medications are not meant to HEAL anything. Medications are meant to suppress a problem long enough for the body to catch up and heal itself. This is an important concept to understand.

So, what do we feed, and what do we supplement with? This is the million dollar question. In a pet that is doing well, you may be able to continue feeding your existing diet, and just add whole food supplements to it. In general, try to pick a high quality, low or no grain diet. For pets with “issues” – a current recommendation is to avoid foods with chicken as a protein source. For cats, grain free diets are ideal. Many holistic vets recommend canned diets mainly for cats. For me “what to feed” is often a question to address on an individual basis – taking into consideration the pets’ health and your budget.

At a bare minimum, adding a whole food supplement to whatever your current regimen is – will still be a huge benefit. I strongly recommend Standard Process Supplements. You can find out more information about the company at www.StandardProcess.com. This company only sells through veterinarians and human health care professionals. We can order the entire line of human and veterinary supplements, as well as the herbal supplements for your use. Standard Process has a unique and patented technique designed to cold process foods to maintain all of the raw, natural nutrition and enzymes contained within the foods.

All of the plant materials used in Standard Process supplements are organic. They have a 1000 acre farm in Wisconsin where they grow and process all of their ingredients – from Seed to Supplement. However, there is a component of the food supplements that contain “glandulars”. Glandulars are organs and “other parts” of cows, sheep, pigs, etc... Glandulars are an important part of nutrition for pets, as in the “wild” they would be eating hearts, kidneys, intestines, brains, even skin, tendons, and bone. Almost the entire carcass would be consumed by a predatory species. Although the company is working towards being 100% organic – there are not enough organic glandular materials available currently to supply this need. So, glandulars contained within the supplements are not organic.

For those requiring Kosher dietary supplements – some of these supplements are definitely not Kosher. This would take an individual evaluation to determine which supplements would be appropriate for this need. However, it is important for us to not impose vegetarian or Kosher guidelines upon our pets. It is just not healthy or natural for them.

At this time, I feel that it is far more important for these nutrients to be within the product than that they be organic. Glandulars are extremely important in that they contain nutrients specific for that organ or tissue system. For example, if you eat nutrients that are good for your liver – they go to your liver. Any extra nutrients your liver does not need at the time, will be stored there for future use. So, if you turn this concept around – when you EAT liver it is good for your liver. If you eat skin (yuck) – it is good for your skin. Eat bone, and it is

good for your bone. We used to do this all the time in our country – but we have unfortunately come to rely on only parts and pieces of the animals that we sacrifice in the name of food. In the “olden days”, we consumed thick stocks made from boiled bones and cartilage. We ate tongue, heart, brain, kidneys, thymus (sweet breads), and other glandulars. Culturally, this has fallen out of favor. However, I am sure your dog or cat would not discriminate given the choice.

This is what I feed my own dogs: I personally feed Solid Gold Hunden Flocken dry food. I soak their food in warm water to cover, and allow it to expand prior to feeding. I add Solid Gold Sea Meal (kelp based) Powdered Supplement to every meal. I add a Fatty Acid supplement to every meal (Standard Process Tuna Omega-3). I add a quality Glucosamine/Chondroitin/MSM supplement to every meal. I add digestive enzymes to every meal. Every dog gets Catalyn Whole Food Supplements everyday. If my dogs were ill in any way, I would choose the canine specific formulas from Standard Process. These are exactly tailored for dogs and their specific needs based on Gastrointestinal needs, Skin needs, Immune System needs, etc... However for large dogs, with general maintenance needs, the Catalyn is an affordable way to supplement them.

Solid Gold is a quality food. I greatly respect the fact that the company recommends adding a food supplement (Sea Meal) to their food prior to feeding it. They obviously realize that this is a more ideal situation. No matter what I think of any food on the market, I will always realize that it is still cooked and processed – and will never be ideal nutrition. This is just a fact of all pet foods on the market today, no matter what the quality. Home cooked diets could be fabulous. However, they are labor intensive, hard to balance nutritionally, and are still created with vitamin, mineral and enzyme deficient foods currently available.

We have seen some amazing results by adding Standard Process Whole Food supplements into our patients' care. Several patients had improvements of 75-100% in chronic, recurrent conditions – ONLY by adding an appropriate whole food supplement into their previous regime. Amazing!

I consult with a holistic vet in Wisconsin, who has noticed an interesting thing. Dogs with histories of eating a lot of grass, have stopped or greatly reduced their “foraging” after being placed on Standard Process Supplements. It makes sense. The dogs want to eat grass, which is loaded with Chlorophyll and fat soluble vitamins. These nutrients have many valuable benefits to the body. Unfortunately, the grass that many of our dogs have access to, has remnants of winter road salts, pollution from passing cars, and heaven forbid Chem-Lawn or fertilizers. No wonder they often vomit up the grass! However, since their diet is lacking, they will try to get their extra “raw” nutrition any way they can.

Dogs, Cats, Ferrets, Rabbits, Parrots, Horses, Humans... – all can have Standard Process Whole Food Supplements. Standard Process specifically carries Dog, Cat, Horse, and Human specific supplements. However, all animals can share in

whole food supplements – we just pick them for specific needs and physiology.
For example, Rabbits would not eat glandulars ☺

For more information on Whole Food Supplements, please contact our clinic.
We are very excited to be completing this very important part of your pets' care,
with a high quality, amazing supplement.

*“Nature gave us the gift of healing. Providing our bodies the nutrients and care
required to heal, lies in our own actions.”*

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