



# THE EVF TIMES

EGLINTON VETERINARY FACILITIES

JUNE 2013

## NUTRITION AND OUR FOUR LEGGED FRIENDS...

Nutrition is one of the simplest and economically sound ways to insure that your pet remains as healthy and energetic as possible. Whether your pet is young and full of energy, or more mature and a little less active, high quality diets are an easy way to provide your pet the right nutrition for their lifestyle.

One of the biggest challenges that a pet owner faces today is the huge number of pet foods available, complicated by the amount of information (some good and some bad) provided on the world wide web. We thought that we would use this space to address some of the questions that we face daily.

### What is a pet food label?

A pet food label is a legal document regulated by the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) and is the primary means of communication between the pet food manufacturers and pet owners. However, reading these labels can be confusing; you are faced with terms such as:

‘ingredients versus nutritional facts’, ‘guaranteed analysis’, an endorsement by AAFCO. What does it all mean?



### Let's start at the top...

The difference between "ingredients" and "nutrients" needs to be clarified.

Ingredients are the vehicles that provide nutrients, while nutrients are food components that support life and are metabolically useful. For example, lamb is an ingredient that provides nutrients such as protein, fatty acids and vitamins.

Ingredients are listed on a pet food label in descending order by weight. The high water content in chicken, beef and lamb makes these ingredients weigh more than dry ingredients such as grains, meals and vitamins, so they are often listed first.

### What then is the guaranteed analysis?

This indicates minimum or maximum levels of nutrients such as protein, fat, fiber and moisture. It does not however, indicate or provide exact levels of nutrients in the pet food.

*Please bookmark our website*

[www.eglintonvet.com](http://www.eglintonvet.com)

*And join us at our Facebook page and NOW on Twitter*



**ONLINE PET PORTAL AVAILABLE**

*Clients with email can access their pet's medical records and reach us at any time of day via our new pet portal*

**A useful tool for pet owners is the Nutritional Adequacy Statement or "AAFCO Statement"** This legally required statement verifies the testing method used to determine nutritional adequacy and indicates whether the food provides complete and balanced nutrition for a specific lifestage of your pet (growth, adult, pregnant/nursing), or if the product is nutritionally adequate for all lifestages.

This analysis is not a guarantee of the nutritional quality of the pet food. As the moisture levels in pet foods vary, it is difficult for the average pet owner to accurately compare nutritional information.

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## **Fleas, Mosquitos, Worms and Ticks are out there**

**All dogs and outdoor cats should have been in for their spring preventive check up and have started their parasite control products.**

If not, we still have appointments left, and you still have time to get yourself protected against all the warm weather “nasties” that could potentially ruin your summer.



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## NUTRITION...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



The labels on pet foods can make a number of claims. In Canada, the use of these terms is not regulated unless a food is AAFCO certified. For example, some terms that you may see include:

**"Natural"** is a term requiring that a pet food to consist of only natural ingredients without chemical alterations. Like most rules, there are exceptions and, in the "natural" category, the exceptions are for vitamins, minerals and other trace nutrients.

**"Organic"** has been legally defined for human foods by the USDA. Right now, pet food companies can use the term "organic" if they follow the same rules as applied to human foods. Plant ingredients in pet foods must be grown without pesticides, artificial fertilizers, genetic modification, irradiation or sewage. Animal ingredients must come from animals raised on organic feed, access to the outdoors, and not treated with antibiotics or hormones.

**"Clinically Proven"** on a package or pet food label means that the claim must be supported by two clinical studies.

**"Holistic"** has no legal definition and is unregulated in the pet food industry. Any pet food could use the term "holistic" in marketing their product. Think of this as a marketing term and not a pet food term.

**"Human grade"** is not a term allowed on a pet food label, unless the food is made in a plant approved for manufacturing human food. Because of this, there are very few pet foods that are labeled "human grade." However, this regulation does not apply to advertising and websites, so some pet food companies will tout "human grade" ingredients in their products.

### **Did you know...**

Veterinary clinics can provide high quality, balanced diets that are either designed to fit your pet's lifestyle or are formulated to ease specific ailments or conditions. At every visit with one of our vets, we will discuss your pet's current diet and make sure that it is appropriate. We recognize that diet can have a huge impact on quality of life and a role in the prevention of disease.

Due to the research data available, veterinary diets are always nutritionally balanced, and often contain levels of anti-oxidants, omega fatty acids and nutraceuticals that are higher than non-veterinary diets. Many also contain ingredients that can limit the development of common ailments, such as compounds to reduce oral tartar and plaque or to aid in the prevention of urinary crystals.

### **Some words of caution...**

**Beware if a food states that a food supports "all lifestages"**. These products likely contain excessive levels of some nutrients necessary for the most demanding lifestage (which is growth). For example, many will contain higher levels of protein and calcium for puppies and kittens, but those levels are inappropriate for an adult or senior pet.

**Please consider your sources of information with respect to pet food.** Is it the teenager in a pet store with limited training specific to certain brands? Are you being tempted with some creative or attractive advertising for foods?



### ONLINE RESOURCES TO ALLOW PET OWNERS TO MAKE GOOD CHOICES WITH RESPECT TO PET FOOD:

Information from the U.S. Food and Drug administration including descriptions of what pet food labels include:

<http://www.fda.gov/animalveterinary/resourcesforyou/ucm047113.htm>

Website for the AAFCO with details as to their programs:

<http://petfood.aafco.org/>

A good site for reliable general information about the ingredients in pet foods:

[www.petfoodnutrition.com](http://www.petfoodnutrition.com)

A list of questions to ask a pet food company. We would love all of our clients to do this with their current foods!

<http://www.petfoodnutrition.com/nutrition/choosing-the-right-food/>

## DVM CORNER: HEALTHY MOUTH

DR. JEN HODGES

The most common disease in pet dogs and cats is periodontal disease (gum disease). This is caused by a build-up of soft plaque on the surface of the teeth which hardens to become calculus (tartar). Bacteria in the plaque irritate the gum tissue which can lead to infected teeth, bad breath and oral pain for your pet. The best way to prevent periodontal disease is with good oral hygiene – just like in people! This can be achieved by a combination of daily tooth brushing, dental diets and chews, and now the *Healthy Mouth* products.



Healthy Mouth is an all natural product that does not contain artificial or synthetic ingredients and has been awarded the VOHC (Veterinary Oral Health Council) seal of acceptance for plaque control.

Healthy Mouth is available for dogs and cats as a water additive or a topical gel. It is designed to clean the teeth and gums to reduce plaque and oral bacteria. It is not intended to replace professional cleanings but is meant to be used as part of a comprehensive oral health care routine, complementing tooth brushing, dental diets and other oral health products.



Please speak to one of our team members or visit [www.healthymouth.com](http://www.healthymouth.com) for more information.



## TECH TALK: HEAT STROKE

BLAIR BUTLER

Summer is finally here! Our days will be filled with family outings, vacations, weekend cottage getaways and long hot days. There is no greater joy than packing up the car with the kids (the 2-legged and 4-legged kinds) and escaping the city for some peace and quiet.

Sadly, we hear stories in the news every summer of animals being left in the car and succumbing to heat stroke. Often times a short trip into the grocery store or the mall to pick up a few items turns into a sad occasion. Heat stroke in animals can also occur in other situations. Vigorous playtime outdoors on a hot day or even a lack of proper shade and cool water is all it takes in order for a dog or cat's core body temperature to skyrocket.

There is no set ambient environmental temperature at which you can predict heatstroke to set in. For example, it can occur when the environmental temperature is low yet the humidity is very high.

Unlike you and I, dogs and cats do not have sweat glands all over their bodies. The main function of the sweat gland is to produce sweat, which then evaporates, cooling the skin and surface blood flow. The cooled blood then flows through the rest of the body and internal organs to cool off.

Now imagine our pets...they are covered in a layer of fur and are only able to regulate body temperature from the tip of their nose, tongue and foot pads? Not a pleasant thought in the hot weather!

Here are a few of the warning signs that your pet may be suffering from heat stroke:

- Excessive or exaggerated panting
- Lethargy
- Drooling
- High fever
- Dark red gums
- Rapid Heartbeat
- Unresponsive to commands and surroundings
- Vomiting

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## HEAT STROKE...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Brachycephalic breeds of dogs and cats (shorter faces and noses) like Boxers, Pugs, Boston Terriers and Persians are more susceptible to heatstroke than other breeds; they have less ability to cool down from breathing/panting than animals with longer faces and noses. Very old, young or overweight pets are also at higher risk of suffering from heat stroke. If you suspect your pet is suffering from heatstroke, head straight for the veterinarian's office or an animal emergency hospital.

It is imperative to get the pet to a doctor immediately as permanent damage to organs can occur. There is also a complex blood problem, called disseminated intravascular coagulation (DIC), which can be a secondary complication to heatstroke and can be fatal. In the short term you can help lower your pet's body temperature by applying towels soaked in cool water to the hairless areas of the body. Place the pet near a fan if possible.

### Safety tips to help you prevent your pet from heatstroke...

- Have an ample supply of cool fresh water available at all times for your pet.
- Playing in the sprinkler or hose will go a long way in lowering body temperature.
- Give pets plenty of rest from exercise while outdoors with plenty of shade. Patches of shaded bare earth are best as they provide the most cooling relief.
- Limit the amount of time spent outdoors on hot humid days.
- Keep an air conditioner or fan on where possible.



### Have you ever noticed how calm and blissful newborn babies seem to be immediately after suckling?

**Introducing Zylkène...** Researchers have long speculated that a substance in milk might be responsible for that state of deep relaxation. They were proven right, with the discovery of a unique and simple active ingredient called alpha-S1 tryptic casein. This is an active ingredient that is derived from milk using a process that replicates the natural digestive process that occurs in newborn babies.

Zylkène was developed to help restore balance and harmony to your pet's life, naturally. It is a nutritional supplement to help reduce chronic and situational stress in dogs and cats, and increase their ability to cope with change.

- All-natural, non-sedating nutritional supplement.
- Zylkène reduces the signs of stress, without any known side effects.
- Easy once-a-day administration.

**Make Zylkène your product of choice for stressed pets. Ask us today.**

Zylkène® decreases the signs of stress – including those associated with chronic stress and fear of noises (fireworks, thunderstorms, etc.).  
Zylkène® increases pets' receptivity to behaviour modification training.  
Zylkène® helps reduce stress reactions in situations that require increased adaptation, such as:

- travel
- moving
- boarding
- adaption
- grooming
- meeting new animals
- meeting new people

Zylkène® is for dogs and cats of any age.



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**Healthy pets are happy  
pets!**



Don't forget to sign up for your free Petsites portal for on-line access to your pet's medical records.

If you have an e-mail address on your account with us, you will have received an e-mail with login instructions. PLEASE CHECK YOUR SPAM FILE if you did not receive an e-mail or contact us and we will get you set up with the info you need.



### Curtis Counter

Eglinton Vet has a resident cat who we adopted in 2010. At that time, he was obese, weighing in at over 30 lbs! *Curtis weighed in at 7.81kg on June 5, 2013. This is an increase over his previous weights. We have had to adjust his food intake again to continue weight loss. Curtis knows that weight loss is hard!*

