

If you insist upon feeding a raw diet, follow the FDA Tips for Safe Handling of Raw Pet Food



- Wash your hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds with soap and hot water after handling raw meat, poultry, or seafood.
- Keep raw meat and poultry products frozen until you are ready to use them.
- Thaw raw meat and poultry products in your refrigerator or microwave, not on your countertop or in your sink.
- Keep raw food separate from other food.
- Thoroughly wash all surfaces, such as counter tops; all utensils, such as cutting boards and knives; all bowls used to prepare and feed raw food; and all other items that come in contact with raw meat, poultry, and seafood with soap and hot water. Follow with a disinfectant. You can make an effective disinfectant solution by adding 1 tablespoon bleach to 1 quart (4 cups) water.
- Cover and refrigerate leftovers immediately or throw them out safely.
- If you use a plastic or other non-porous cutting board, run it through the dishwasher after each use.

Resources

- Food and Drug Administration Pet Food Recall site: www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/default.htm; "Filter by" Animal Health.
- Food and Drug Administration Tips for Safe Handling of Raw Pet Food: www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/ResourcesforYou/AnimalHealthLiteracy/ucm369141.htm



Clinical Nutrition Consultation Service Veterinary Teaching Hospital

245 Duck Pond Drive, Blacksburg, VA 24061
P: 540-231-4621 | F: 540-231-6448
vetnutrition@vt.edu | vetmed.vt.edu

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College of
Veterinary Medicine

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What are raw meat-based diets?

There are many different types of raw meat-based diets, including commercially available and homemade diets. Raw meat diets are diets that contain portions of animal meat or meat by-products, not subjected to heat or cooking during their preparation. These diets contain muscle meat, organs, and bone from poultry, mammals, or fish.



Risky for both you and your pet!

The proposed benefits of raw meat based diets range from preservation of natural enzymes to elimination of artificial preservatives. However, there is a lack of evidence to support these claims. The most significant concern with feeding a homemade or commercial raw meat-based diet to a pet is the increased risk of bacterial disease to both pet and human. Presence of bacterial pathogens (i.e. *Salmonella* spp., *Campylobacter* spp., *Clostridium* spp. and *Escherichia coli* (E.coli)) are detected more frequently in raw meat based diets as compared to commercial extruded dry and canned pet food. Pets can shed these pathogens, and thus share them with other pets and humans, without clinical signs of illness. The World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA), American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA), and American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) all discourage the feeding of raw meat diets to pets. Additionally, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) "thinks raw pet food poses significant health risks to pets and pet owners."

For the safety of patients and employees at the Veterinary Teaching Hospital, we do not allow raw meat-based diets in the teaching hospital.