

BARF: Bone And Raw Food – Dietary Problems

Spread out from Australia where it was invented back in 1993.

BARF-feeders are trying to mimic the diets from wolves and wild cats.

For most owners BARF means “the most natural“ and therefore BARF diet is considered the best possible diet form for their pets.

What is thereby missed is the fact, that nature has no aim in keeping animals healthy and long lived. In nature an animal’s role is to reproduce itself enough times to keep the species thriving and therefore the animal is only intended to stay alive until that mission is fulfilled! It has been shown that most wild animals actually suffer from malnutrition and different kinds of deficiencies, depending on country and region. E.g. wolves in eastern and central Europe suffers severely from iodine-deficiency!

BARF-diet is based on:

- Raw meat (rabbit, horse, calf, chicken, beef, venison... *no* pork)
- Inner organs (chicken stomach, heart, liver, rumen, throat etc.)
- Bones (chicken bones, goose throats, beef tails, ribs, beef joints ...)

The risks with BARF diets are not insignificant:

- Risk of infections:
 - Viruses (Aujetzky)
 - Bacteria (Salmonella, Listeria, Clostridia...)
 - Protozoal infestations (Toxoplasmosis, Neospora...)
 - Worm infestations (Ascariasis, Trichinosis...)
- Injuries, constipation due to bones
- Intoxications:
 - Avocado
 - Aubergines
 - Grapes (can cause total kidney failure within 24-72 hours. Toxic dose: 10-30g grapes/kg BW)
 - Onions
 - Chocolate
 - Macadamia nuts
 - Etc.
- Deficiencies:
 - Thiamine: Raw fish contains thiaminase which destroys thiamine.
 - Fibres: Vegetables are blended which destroys the fibres.
 - Biotin: Raw egg whites contain avidine which binds biotin in the intestines thereby causing secondary biotin deficiency.
 - Protein digestion: Raw egg whites also contain trypsin inhibitors, which impairs the protein digestion and causes diarrhoea.
 - Calcium: a 10 kg dog has to digest at least 700g Quark daily to cover its needs, BUT for a 20 kg dog 100g bones per day means a factor-10 over supply!
 - Phosphate: Bananas have too many calories and too much phosphate!
 - Copper: Increased Ca+P leads to secondary Copper deficiency. The risk for uroliths increases.
 - Zinc: Increased Ca+P also lead to secondary Zinc deficiency. The risk for uroliths increases. Skin problems and muscle weakness can follow.
- Hormone imbalances:
 - Feeding throats can cause excessive thyroid hormone intake. These are not inactivated by cooking, and cause imbalance in the endocrine system.

Common mistakes:

- “Natural” additives like the algae spirulina/chlorella provide iodine = false.
- “Natural” soil provides trace minerals = false.

All fruit- and vegetables available are not enough to supply sufficient amounts of both trace minerals and vitamins!

That means that supplementations **must always** be given as part of a BARF diet.

Unfortunately most BARF-feeders consider supplementations as “poison” and therefore are unwilling to provide supplementations to their animals.

Laboratory findings:

Up to 70% of dogs feed a BARF diet, without supplementations, show **iodine, zinc, copper and manganese deficiencies**.

In dogs also **Vit D deficiency** and **Vit A over supplementation** are seen as a result of too much liver in the diet.

In cats **Vit A deficiency** are seen as a result of a diet lacking enough Vit A for the species.

Distinguishing between dogs and cats are often not made within BARF diets, although the two species are quite different in their dietary needs.

All in all it is a personal conviction how one feeds. BARF feeding can sometimes make sense, when e.g. a special diet is needed, which is not available commercially or not accepted by the animal. Main motivation for BARF-feeding have been seen as being: increase the level of activity, nursing/carrying extra for the pet plus the idea taken from humans that eating the same each day is in principle un-healthy....

Commercial diets:

Are better as their reputation; but often words like “Full diet, Complete diet” are used, as if all nutrients were included, although that is not automatically the case by all of them.

Quality of ingredients varies from brand to brand!

Does one want to know exactly from which source the ingredients arises and the quality of these one has to read the ingredient list thoroughly, check the manufacturer and the listings on their homepage and the EU-law 1774/2002, which states what can be used for whom:

All special products (puppy, reproduction, senior, allergy...) as well as special diets (kidney, liver, diabetes...) are made for a special group and are only allowed to be feed to its target group. This also applies for „Adult“ or „Maintenance“ diets, which should only be feed to grown animals and not to lactating bitches or young growing animals.

Bottom line - One has to use ones common sense and most often price and quality of ingredients go hand in hand.

Summary:

If one wants to place their animal on a BARF diet, supplementations have to be given on a daily basis, Ca/P levels has to be adjusted to the animal and dogs and cats have to be feed differently. Regular controls are recommended to optimize the diet as much as possible to the animal.

BARF Profile:

Includes the parameters: Ca, P, Cu, Zn, Iodine, Vitamin A, Vitamin D and Total T4.

3 ml cooled serum is needed (light-proofed), results within 7 days and the price is only **kr. 810,00***. To order this profile, please write “test # 2266” on the submission form.

If you have questions to the above, or to our service, please do not hesitate to contact us on timmol @laboklin.com or +45 4352 1228.

Kind regards,

Your LABOKLIN Team,
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