

What Should NEVER Be in Your Pet's Food

Always check the first 5 ingredients in your pet's food. A specified protein such as chicken, beef, lamb, etc... should be listed as the first ingredient. This is not a complete list, but one to give you a basic idea of what to avoid when choosing a pet food. Read the ingredients list on your bag of pet food; if it lists any of these items it's time to get a new food!

BHA (Butylated Hydroxyanisole) – A white, waxy antioxidant, $C_{11}H_{16}O_2$, used to preserve fats and oils, especially in foods. It is banned from human use in some countries, but is still permitted in the United States. A possible human carcinogen, apparently carcinogenic in animal experiments also. The oxidative characteristics and/or metabolites of BHA and BHT may contribute to carcinogenicity or tumorigenicity.

BHT (Butylated Hydroxytoluene) - A crystalline antioxidant, $C_{15}H_{24}O$, used to preserve fats and oils, especially in foods. Banned from human use in many countries, but still permitted in the United States. A possible human carcinogen, apparently carcinogenic in animal experiments also. The oxidative characteristics and/or metabolites of BHA and BHT may contribute to carcinogenicity or tumorigenicity.

By-products – In many cases, by-product meals are derived from “4-D” meat sources - animals that have been rejected by the human food industry because they were presented to the meat packing plant as “Dead, Dying, Diseased, or Disabled.” By-products can include heads, hooves, tails, feathers, beaks, and other undesirable or “waste” parts of animals.

Corn & Corn Gluten Meal - Corn has minimal nutritional value. Corn gluten is a by-product of corn, produced during the wet milling process. Corn and/or corn gluten is added to absorb the toxins that may be in the rendered parts when added to the cooking process. Corn is the #3 cause of allergies in dogs. Dogs do not digest corn well, and would not eat corn in the wild. Corn and corn gluten meal are cheap, and used by many companies as filler and to raise the protein level of the food without using meat. 88% of all corn grown in the US is genetically modified.

Ethoxyquin – People who worked in the rubber business and were exposed to Ethoxyquin contracted skin cancer, blindness, leukemia, liver damage, and diarrhea. In animals, it can kill the immune system and get rid of the animal's only line of defense against diseases. It has been shown to cause certain kidney cancers and stomach and colon tumors. The Department of Agriculture lists it as a pesticide.

Propylene Glycol – A colorless, viscous, hygroscopic liquid, $CH_3CHOHCH_2OH$, used in automobile antifreeze solutions, in hydraulic fluids, and as a solvent. Used as humectant in semi-moist kibble to keep it from drying out. Can be toxic if consumed in large amounts, and should definitely not be an ingredient in a food an animal will eat daily for weeks, months, or even years of the pet's life.

Soy - Most experts on pet nutrition agree soy isn't good for cats or dogs. It is a low-quality, incomplete protein well known to create food allergies in pets. Soy has been linked to gas and deadly bloat in dogs. It is high in purines and is therefore an inappropriate protein source for urate-forming dogs. It is also high in silicates, promoting the formation of silica stones. The carbohydrate action of soy can cause a rise in blood sugar in many cats. Soy is also linked to seizures and thyroid damage and, since hyperthyroidism is common in kitties, this is yet another reason it should not be part of a feline's diet. Soy has also been shown to interfere with estrogen levels in female animals. 93% of all soy grown in the US is genetically modified.

Sugar/Corn Syrup – Sugar or sweetener is an absolutely unnecessary ingredient in pet foods, added to make the food more attractive to animals. Continuous consumption can promote hypoglycemia, diabetes, obesity, nervousness, cataracts, tooth decay, arthritis, and allergies. Pets become addicted to foods that contain sugars, so it can be difficult to get them to switch to a better food.

Wheat Gluten – An inexpensive by-product of human food processing with almost no nutritional value left. It serves mainly as a binding ingredient and is a well-known cause of allergies in humans and their pets.

For more information about what food would be best for your pet, please ask any one of our food experts here at Pet Barn! Nutrition is our business!

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