

PET CORNER

As we see it... Treats for Our Pets

Walk into any large pet store, grooming shop, feed dealer, or any other store that sells supplies or foods for your pets and you will see row after row of treats and snacks to give to your pet. We spend billions each year to give our pets something special. Is it really something that special and why do we do it?

To get a glimpse at the dynamics behind this, let's take a stroll through the aisles of our favorite supermarket, department store, and even the gas station. Virtually every aisle displays some candy or snack food for us to munch on. And it works! We pick up bags of snacks, a pack of candy, and we enjoy these little, calorie filled morsels as we drive to our next stop only to do the same thing.

We do this for many reasons. First and foremost is our nature, we are hunter gatherers. Our genetic make-up tells us to find little "goodies" as we travel through our day to add nutritious fuel to our body. The fruits and berries we would find as we traveled the countryside are now replaced with the treats we find in virtually every location we visit.

Have you ever read the list of

chemicals and additives in the "treats" we all crave? Do they really satisfy our need for the nutrition necessary to keep us going? Do they add to our overall health and well being?

We all really know that these snacks are not healthy for us, that they actually contribute to our own challenges like obesity, ADD, diabetes, cancer, and hundreds of other problems.

So why do we want to do the same to our pets? Now don't get me wrong, there is nothing wrong with supplementing the needed nutritional needs of your pet with something special. However, we must remember that we are making the choices for them and we have an obligation to only provide them with good "goodies". After all, when we make the decision for us, we are responsible for the outcome of our health, wherein when we decide for our pets, we are responsible for the outcome of another living creature.

Treats, as I see it, can enhance the health of your pet if you follow a few simple guidelines. First and foremost, choose treats that are healthy and natural to the pet. Since dogs and cats are



carnivores, items we enjoy like cookies and candy can be problematic for them, while a hunk of buffalo liver or a piece of dried herring satisfies their taste buds and instincts.

Read the labels! If the ingredients cannot be found on a supermarket shelf, it is probably not a food and you should be wary.

And last but not least, a treat is supposed to be a little something extra, not the main component of the diet. Use that common sense approach for a healthier pet and self.

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