

Natural Remedies

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Alfalfa the 'King of Plants'



Does your cat or dog have arthritis, digestive problems, suffer from urinary tract infections, irritable bowel syndrome, has liver or kidney disease or simply lack vitality?

Alfalfa, a nutritious and healing herb known for centuries as the '*King of Plants*' and the '*Father of all Foods*,' has been used for centuries not only as part of a healthy diet but also to:

- improve urinary tract health
- detox the body
- have a mild diuretic effect
- Suppress appetite
- assist the functioning of the thyroid gland
- provide relief from digestive tract disorders
- assist cell division
- protect the heart
- fight infection (due to it being a natural antibiotic and having anti-fungal properties)
- cleanse the colon

Alfalfa is naturally alkaline. As a result, it contributes to lowering the levels of uric acid in the blood, which can build up around joints causing arthritic pain. If your dog or cat is suffering from arthritis or another form of inflammation of the joints, a regular

inclusion of alfalfa in the diet would be very beneficial.

As alfalfa is a natural diuretic it certainly helps to detox the body of harmful toxins. If your pet has kidney or liver disease, was on a course of medication or antibiotics or if your pet has a digestive problem, alfalfa in the diet will help by flushing the body of unwanted chemicals and speed up the recovery process.

As a highly nutritious herb, Alfalfa is approximately 20% protein containing eight of the essential amino acids. It is very rich in minerals in particular calcium, magnesium and potassium. Alfalfa has lots of B vitamins plus the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K.

A word of warning. If your pet is on medication to thin the blood, excessive vitamin K can counteract this effect. Vitamin K is essential for clotting the blood both internally and externally.

Alfalfa is best added to the diet in its raw, live enzyme, organic form. However, powdered alfalfa is also very beneficial when added to the raw diet or even to the commercial food diet.

As always, by maintaining a healthy gut, the entire body benefits which means a stronger immune system, a greater quality of life, more energy and a greater quality of life for you and your animal companion.

Are there any natural remedies, which can alleviate hyperthyroidism without the side effects experienced with pharmaceutical drugs?

As with all degenerative diseases, they all have one thing in common and that is a severely compromised immune system. From cancer to asthma, the underlying cause must be addressed along with the symptoms if we are to give our pets the opportunity to regain quality of life.

A compromised immune system can be the result of several factors including:

Genetics
Environmental toxins
Stress
Lack of exercise
Poor nutrition
The overuse of vaccinations and medications

Unfortunately, the first 14 years of Oliver's life was made up of yearly vaccinations, parasite control medications, an array of antibiotics, anti-inflammatories and other pharmaceutical drugs, which was accompanied (or indeed caused) by a heavily processed commercial cat food diet. Looking back now, he didn't stand a chance. All of the things I was doing as a *'good owner'* were not only compromising his immune system but also paving the path for a future of degenerative diseases. For the last several years all of the cats and dogs in my care have been given an all raw, species appropriate diet, no more processed foods! Once you make the switch there's no turning back as the health of your animals change dramatically.

However, the change came a little late for Oliver and he now fights with several degenerative diseases including sinusitis, asthma, renal disease and hyperthyroidism. The good news is, Oliver is healthier than he has been in years, drug free, great appetite, active and enjoying his life. His immune system is strong and as a result symptoms of his ongoing challenges are minimal.

I look at it this way.....

'a great diet with some good supplements is like putting money into a savings account. When a bill comes along (in this case an illness), paying the price is no problem as you have plenty of savings (a strong immune system).'

When my cat was diagnosed with hyperthyroidism he was put on pharmaceutical drugs that had horrid side effects. So my research began to find alternative methods in which I could alleviate the symptoms caused by the hyperthyroidism. Whilst I am not advising you throw away prescription drugs, I am saying there are other methods of controlling this life threatening disorder that in my opinion are worth trying. Although they have worked for my cat, a decision to give up conventional treatments for alternative, natural methods should never be taken lightly.

Natural remedies for Hyperthyroidism.



A popular combination of herbal remedies is *Lemon Balm* and *Bugleweed*.

Whilst Lemon Balm acts as a mild sedative, relaxing the nervous system and relieving anxiety, Bugleweed slows the thyroid gland by lowering the production of thyroid

stimulating hormone from the pituitary gland.

Other herbal remedies used to treat hyperthyroidism are:

Valerian which acts as a natural mild sedative, it is a relaxant and has a measurable calming effect in animals. Whilst the human dosage is 450-900mg, a cat would be given approx 50mg/day

Hawthorn is also a mild sedative. Whilst it can assist in moderating a regular heartbeat, it's also known to be good for the kidneys.

Aloe Vera is a well-recognized herb that has an amazing array of uses. Aloe Vera has the ability to reduce inflammation by inhibiting the production of prostaglandins, activates the immune response, reduces viral replication, it is an antibiotic and is anti-fungal, it helps reduce chronic fatigue and it helps hyperthyroidism by assisting in hormonal imbalances.

Skullcap is an herb, which has a calming effect, relieving nervous tension and anxiety, alleviating restlessness without causing drowsiness. Dosage 0.5ml per 8kg body weight.

Eleuthera is an herb, which alleviates stress.

Motherwort is an herb, which specifically deals with heart palpitations, often being experienced in hyperthyroid patients.

Important everyday additions to the diet:

L-Carnitine is an essential amino acid required for the conversion of fatty acids into energy. This metabolic chemical reaction supports in particular the functioning of the skeletal muscles, the heart and the kidneys. L-Carnitine, in a deficient body can lift the energy as fatty acids are broken down and converted. In humans it has been successful in reversing the signs of hyperthyroidism. *This can be safely added to the food everyday. For every 5kg of body weight add 250mg.*

CoQ10 enzyme is a good addition to the diet when a pet is diagnosed with hyperthyroidism. Most cats and dogs with hyperthyroidism are found to be low in CoQ10 enzyme. It also helps the kidneys. CoQ10 is essential for the production of energy in each and every cell in the body. As CoQ10 enzyme declines with age, *it's a great supplement to include in the diet every day and is very safe to use long term.*

It is also advisable to include in the diet on a regular basis:

B complex

Vitamin C

Essential Fatty Acids such as salmon oil and a good omega 6 such as borage seed or black currant oil.

Medicinal Mushrooms to strengthen immune system (purchased from your health food store).

So how do you decide which supplement to use?

Choose one to two of the most appropriate herbal remedies.

Make a note of your pet's present behaviour; include physical, mental symptoms, appetite and mood. Then start your herbal remedies every day for 5-6 days and observe any changes. Then allow a two-day break. This allows you to monitor the animal's response to the herbs.

In my own experience, valerian and lemon balm have worked wonders for my hyperthyroid cat. I give him these herbs everyday for about 2 weeks and then replace them with Skullcap and Hawthorn for a few days. This seems to work for my cat. His appetite is good, he's relaxed but still alert, he's inquisitive, he seems happy and his heart rate is within the normal range (150-200bpm).



How to decide on the dosage?

Whether you have purchased tincture (liquid) or powder form of the above herbs, dosage is based on the animal's weight compared to the recommended human dosage. For example I'm 55kg and my cat is 5kg. As he's approximately one tenth of my weight. I give him one tenth of the dosage I would take.

“Although herbs are generally weaker and gentler medicines than most drugs, they still demand respect. “More” is not necessarily better...” (Tilford et al 2009)

Are there any ready-made herbal remedies for hyperthyroidism?

Yes, there is one highly recommended herbal remedy called ‘Thyroid Support Gold’ available online from Amazon.com



I haven't tried it on my animals, but it appears to have very good reviews.

If possible, work with your vet when trialing your cat or dog on herbal remedies. Monitor and note down blood pressure, heart rate, behaviour, appetite and any other physical symptoms that change. Most importantly your cat or dog should be eating a high quality all raw diet.

coming soon

Medicinal Mushrooms for a Stronger Immune System

Mushrooms have been used as an important part of Chinese Medicine for thousands of years. It's only recently that they have become a modern scientific study. With an increasing number of studies being carried out, clinical research is proving that medicinal mushrooms are indeed a potent form of healing. Their active ingredient, *beta glucan* has been shown to increase the immune cell response. Beta glucan is a polysaccharide from the mushroom cell wall, which is responsible for activating white blood cells.



They are renowned for their ability to:

- *Stimulate the immune system*
- *Improve memory*
- *Improve concentration*
- *Support liver function*
- *Support kidney function*
- *Improve the health of the skin*
- *Increase energy whilst lowering stress*
- *Reduce asthma*
- *Strengthen the cardio-vascular system*
- *Prevent and treat cancer*

Are they safe for cats and dogs?

Absolutely. Medicinal mushrooms are very beneficial to cats and dogs. They are non-toxic and carry no harmful side effects, which are commonly seen in conventional medicine.

In what form are medicinal mushroom found?



Most health food shops now sell a range of medicinal mushrooms

MOST health food shops now sell a range of medicinal mushrooms either dried or as a powder in easy to swallow capsules.

The most beneficial form of medicinal mushrooms are those that have been prepared by *'hot water extraction.'*

Hot water extraction ensures that the active components are released from within the tough chitin cell walls rather than broken apart by a grinding action.

When buying any form of medicinal mushrooms look for the label *'produced by hot water extraction.'*

Some Internet pet suppliers also sell medicinal mushrooms in a powder form. A very popular brand called 'MUSH Medicinal Mushroom Blend for Pets' can be purchased on amazon.com.

The types of medicinal mushrooms available are:

Chaga. A powerful antioxidant

Agaricus blazei. Simulates natural killer cells as part of the immune response

Cordyceps. Increase of energy, stamina, endurance whilst lowering stress

Coriolus. Widely used immune support

Lion's Mane. To improve memory and concentration, accelerates growth of the myelin sheath around the nerve cells.

Maitake. Supports the health of the immune system

Reishi. Lowers inflammation, eases respiratory problems, lowers stress

Shiitake. Improves liver function by helping clear out toxins, prevents viral replication

Tremella. To improve health of the skin

Many of the commercial products are a blend of several mushrooms and advertised as *'immune support.'* Hopefully the summary (as above) of each mushroom will assist you in choosing the correct blend for your pet or indeed for yourself

What dosage should you give your pet?

Approx: 1/4 teaspoon each day of powdered medicinal mushrooms for every 10kg of body weight.

Can they be used long term?

Medicinal mushrooms are extremely safe to use short and long term. If you would like your cat or dog to remain healthy and strong with minimal sickness you could add a little medicinal mushroom powder into their food 3-4 times a week.

Taking Care of Teeth and Gums

"It is enormously important that you pay close attention to the condition of your dog's or cat's teeth and gums, not just from the perspective of comfort during chewing and eating but because there is a definite link between oral hygiene, your animal's immune system, and the long-term health of organs such as the heart, kidneys and liver."
(Goldstein et al 2005)

My Story

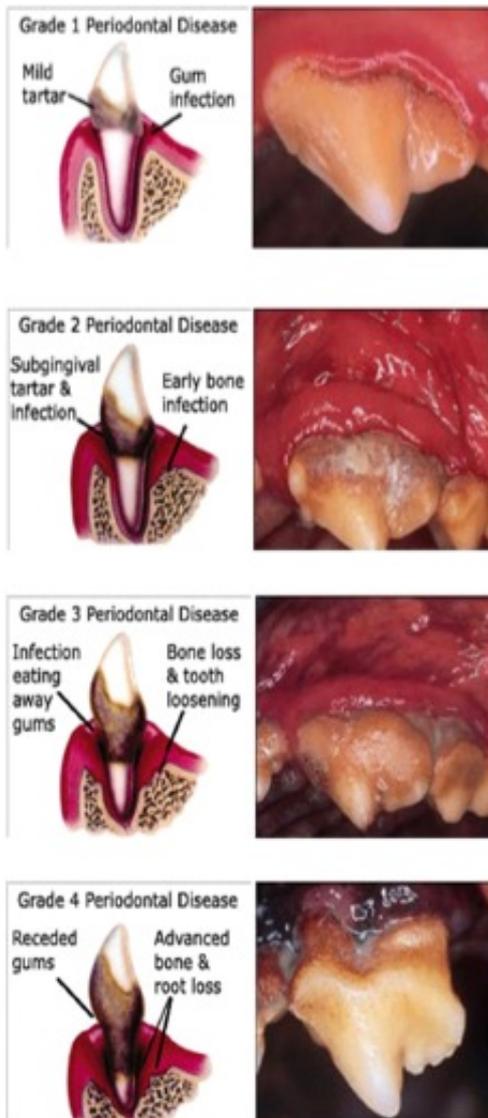
My old 19-year-old cat needed his teeth scaled and two long overdue tooth extractions. However, due to him having chronic kidney disease the Vet was understandably reluctant to carry out the procedure due to the anesthetic being detrimental to severely damaged kidneys.

I thought long and hard about this. If I went ahead with the procedure he could die from the anesthetic. At first I hesitated.

Then I thought, who am I to keep my cat in pain just so he can live longer, how selfish. I decided to go ahead.

That was 3 weeks ago and Oliver is like a kitten again. He's more alert, has an increased appetite, he's cleaning himself again and is really enjoying being pain free. Rather than destroy his kidneys, having the procedure done has taken stress off the kidneys (not to mention all of his other organs). His immune system is now breathing a much-needed sigh of relief.

The Stages of Periodontal Disease



1. Plaque, an adhesive fluid composed of bacteria stick to the teeth
2. The bacteria form a strong hold on the tooth surface
3. If plaque is not removed on a regular basis, bacteria start to eat the supporting gum tissue
4. Mineral salts in saliva form a 'calculus,' a hard crust that cover the plaque.
5. The layer of plaque is protected by the calculus and as a result becomes more difficult to remove
6. The gum tissue becomes irritated
7. The irritation leads to inflammation of the gums, this is tender and painful
8. The plaque and calculus covered teeth with inflamed gums is called gingivitis
9. Bacteria continue to eat supporting gum tissue, which leads to loss of ligaments that hold the tooth to the gum
10. Teeth become loose, pain intensifies, the bacteria continue to do their damage, bones recess.

The Outcome:

- The immune system becomes overworked, inflammation is continuous
- Your pet suffers in silence
- The bacteria from the mouth then spread via the blood and gut to every other part of the body. This influx of harmful bacteria overloads the immune system 24 hours a day.
- Heart and kidney disease are two of many chronic conditions directly connected to long term, untreated periodontal disease.



This tooth is at the early stages of gingivitis. The plaque has found a strong hold on the tooth and the calculus is starting to build on the top. It is best to have this removed by a Vet, but if for whatever reason this is not an option, you can, with time, patience and persistence break this down with regular brushing or better still, give your cat a raw chicken neck each day to munch on.

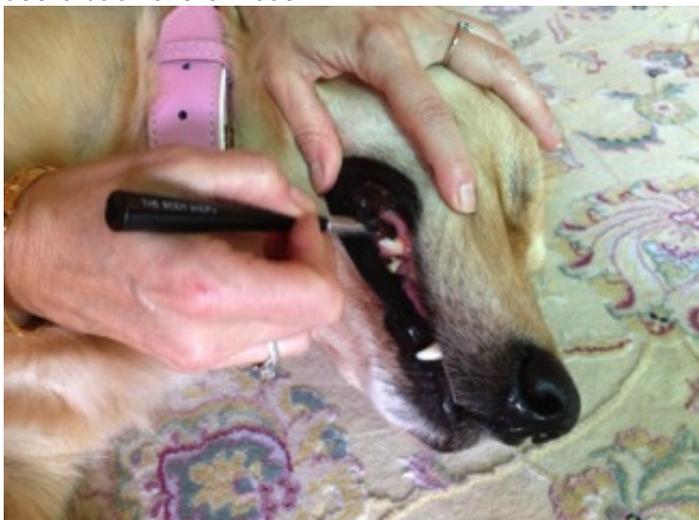
How is this destruction and pain prevented?

- Raw meaty bones every day, which clean the teeth and gums.





- Clean your cat or dogs teeth using a *pet enzymatic toothpaste* or you can use a *little baking soda mixed into paste with a few drops of water*. Use a small child's toothbrush or with a cat I find a make up eye shadow brush is the easiest to clean the molars right at the back of the mouth.



- Another great way to take care of teeth is to open a capsule of CoQ10 enzyme and rub the liquid along the gum line.

- Add vitamin C to the diet. This vitamin improves gum health and the assimilation of minerals.

Plan of Action

If your cat or dog's teeth and gums are already suffering from gingivitis, first and foremost you need to take them directly to a Vet for teeth scaling and possibly tooth extraction. Once the gums have begun to heal, after 2-3 days start a regular program to ensure this does not reoccur.

Dietary Supplements

(In no way do these supplements replace much needed dental work. They can however, alleviate pain and slow down periodontal disease whilst also boosting the immune system)

The following is based on an adult 5-6kg dog or cat:

CoQ10Enzyme (20mg/day),
Vitamin C (250mg x2/daily),
Echinacea (up to 7 drops x2/daily).
Fresh Aloe Vera juice applied directly to inflamed gums
Propolis applied directly to gum line (use a cotton bud)



All of these dietary supplements can be picked up from your local health food shop.

The Good News

Pets that have suffered painful toothache and gum disease and then have their teeth scaled and bad teeth removed get a new lease of life! It's amazing how much better they feel. The immune system becomes strong again, inflammation in the body is reduced, organs breath a sigh of relief, the bad breath smells from the mouth stop, eating becomes a pleasure again, toothache has gone.

As we all know what chronic ongoing pain is like, it's so incredibly important to ensure your pet is not having to go through such unnecessary pain and discomfort.

For the long term health of your cat or dog, keep teeth and gums cleans by whatever method works for you.

Aloe Vera to the rescue

Aloe Vera is an easy to grow and maintain plant. The incredible medicinal properties of the gel contained in the leaves are truly a gift from nature.



Useful for many ailments of the body, it has the ability to heal:

- burns (mix gel with a little Vitamin E oil)
- skin rashes
- skin infections
- dry, flaky skin
- hot spots (common in some dog breeds)
- sunburn
- insect bites
- relieves eczema and dermatitis





Before Bella was rescued she had been living on a commercial heavily processed diet. She had poor skin, hot spots, poor coat condition, digestive upsets and all the signs of periodontal disease. Aloe Vera helped clear up the hot spots and soothed her digestive system, whilst the *all-raw, fresh diet* healed her body from the inside out.

Taken orally, aloe vera can:

- relieve heartburn (by increasing pH)
- reduce acidity in the gut following a stomach upset (vomiting). Aloe vera juice mixed with a little slippery elm powder works wonders for relieving an upset stomach.
- give relief to arthritis
- aid the normalization of the blood sugar, lessening symptoms of diabetes
- reduce inflammation
- be a wonderful detoxifier
- reduce symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome
- reduce bloating and indigestion
- improve the overall health of the digestive system
- stimulate the liver to produce more glutathione (an antioxidant critical for the production of white blood cells)
- Decrease the need for kidney dialysis (keeps kidneys working more efficiently if taken on a daily basis)
- If taken on a daily basis provide hydration for the body due to its high content of hydrogen
- Acts as a prebiotic, providing nutrients for probiotics (good bacteria eg: live bacteria such as acidophilus, bifidus). As a result this improves the effectiveness of probiotics
- Dissolves mucous in the intestines, which greatly assists absorption of nutrients

Apart from all of these wonderful benefits, Aloe Vera contains an array of nutrients supporting the overall health of the body. Aloe vera gel (or indeed aloe vera juice bought from your local health food shop) contains:

- vitamins A, C, E
- minerals including calcium, magnesium, zinc, selenium, chromium
- antioxidants
- fibre
- amino acids
- enzymes (which naturally improve absorption of nutrients)
- polysaccharides (which assist to lubricate joints, brain, nervous system and the skin)

In conclusion, I strongly suggest we should all have a large pot of aloe vera growing in the backyard and a bottle of aloe vera juice 'on hand' in the fridge at all times.

Make aloe vera part of your day and your much-loved pet's day too. The health benefits speak for themselves.

Herbal Supplements for Cats and Dogs

"Without balanced nutrition, the use of herbal medicines in the holistic care of your animal is a waste of time, money and plants."
(Tilford et al 2009)



Herbs serve as a helping hand to good nutrition. According to author of, 'Herbs for Pets,' if the body lacks nutrients, herbs are a pointless addition to the diet. For herbs to be of benefit, they need to stimulate the energy and building materials from good quality nutrients. For example, the herb Echinacea can assist the immune system by stimulating what is already in place from good nutrients.

There are a vast array of herbs that can be of benefit to the health and longevity of our cats and dogs, however not all of such herbs are safe to use on a long term and continuous basis. For example, the herb Goldenseal should only be used short term. Goldenseal acts to inhibit pathogens that come into contact with the mouth, gut and urinary tract. It is an anti-inflammatory. Seven days use is the advised amount of time to give this herb, as after this time, it can cause excessive salivation due to a chemical called berberine. (Tilford et al 2009) Garlic is a relatively safe herb to add to our pets diet, however in large amounts it can cause anemia (Goldstein et al 2005).

Author, Goldstein, also suggests that when purchasing herbal remedies, they should be from a reputable source with standardized formulas, which guarantee purity and potency. Formulas should be extracted from organic herbs using minimal alcohol for preservation. (Goldstein et al 2005)

According to Tilford, a safe and long-term herbal supplement that can be added to cat and dog food is a combination of *Nettle*, *Dandelion leaf*, *alfalfa*, *powdered flaxseed* and *spirulina*. Mixed in equal parts, half a teaspoon can be added to a cat's daily diet. This combination of herbs complements the diet with protein, vitamins A, B, C, E, K, omega 3 fatty acids and minerals including calcium, iron, phosphorus and magnesium.



Very popular herbs for cats and dogs include:

- Alfalfa* high in nutrients, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory
- Aloe Vera soothes the intestinal tract, anti-oxidant, antibacterial & tonic
- Astragalus helps to improve kidney circulation, assists with hyperthyroidism, stimulates immune system

Borage seed oil anti-inflammatory, treats liver, cardiovascular tonic*

Natural Remedies

- Burdock root long-term liver and blood tonic, diuretic, anti-inflammatory
- Bugleweed useful for cats with mild hyperthyroidism, acts as a diuretic, assists the heart
- Cat's Claw boosts immune system, treatment of arthritis, cancer, urinary infections
- Chamomile anti-inflammatory, assists digestion, relaxing, soothing
- Dandelion leaf* natural diuretic, flushes kidneys, cleanses liver
- Devil's Claw reduces inflammation, eases osteoarthritis & stomach upsets
- Echinacea for immune support, short-term use
- Flaxseed (crushed) is rich in essential fatty acids, improves skin conditions
- Garlic assists to rid the body of internal parasites
- Ginger an antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and digestive aid
- Ginkgo dilates and improves tonicity of nephrons (in kidneys)
- Goldenseal inhibits pathogens, anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory
- Hawthorn increases renal circulation without increasing blood pressure
- Lemon Balm assists in controlling hyperthyroidism and high blood pressure
- Marshmallow for the relief of digestive and respiratory problems and urinary tract infections
- Milk Thistle assists to detoxify the liver, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant
- Motherwort supports the heart, calms the nervous system, helps to bring calmness
- Mullein to assist upper respiratory infection & inflammation
- Nettle high in nutrients, assists allergies, antihistamine effect
- Olive Leaf antiviral, antibacterial, useful for infections of the skin, urinary & respiratory tract
- Parsley* natural diuretic, treats anaemia, freshens breath, diuretic
- Rosemary calming, relaxing, antispasmodic, cardiovascular tonic
- Skullcap a sedative which does not cause drowsiness, alleviates restlessness
- Slippery Elm soothes the mucous membranes, assists gastrointestinal upsets
- St John's Wort treats depression, separation anxiety, antiviral, antibacterial
- Turmeric potent antioxidant, stimulates bile production, thins blood
- Uva Ursi recommended for cats and dogs with urinary tract infections when urine is alkaline, not advisable for pets with kidney or liver disease
- Valerian for the treatment of anxiety, restlessness, use in small doses
- Yucca to ease and assist arthritis, stimulates appetite

Four of the most popular herbs*, which can complement our pets health on a regular and long term basis and be added to the intake

Health on a regular and long term basis and be added to the intake of minerals, vitamins, EFA's and other nutrients are:

**Alfalfa powder*

**Borage seed oil*

**Nettle*

**Dandelion leaf*

Alfalfa contains a huge array of nutrients, which includes 50% protein, trace minerals, fibre, vitamins including A, B1, B12, C, D, E, K. Alfalfa is high in chlorophyll, which makes for an excellent antioxidant. Alfalfa is considered to be one of the best treatments for arthritis, rheumatism, gout and other inflammatory diseases. It is excellent in the care of older animals as it does not irritate the stomach. Its alkalinizing effect reduces acidity in the gut and urinary tract. (Tilford et al 2009) Regarded as a safe, regular use herb, Alfalfa is often fed to animals that need to increase weight. (Messonnier 2001)

Alfalfa can be combined with dandelion, yucca and licorice for overall health. (Tilford et al 2009)

In regards to safety, Alfalfa powder is not a problem. However, the seeds can cause blood disorders due to a chemical L-canavanine. Animals who are allergic to pollen may also be sensitive to alfalfa. (Messonnier 2001)

Borage seed oil is readily available in capsule form that can be added to the regular diet of cats and dogs. Borage has huge amounts of essential fatty acids, in particular, gamma-linolenic acid (GLA). GLA, an omega 6 fatty acid, is effective in assisting the liver, cardiovascular problems, inflammatory diseases and in treating itchy, dry skin. As GLA is critical in the production of 'prostaglandins,' borage seed oil is an important addition to the diet. Prostaglandins are compounds essential for countless metabolic functions. As the body does not produce its own GLA, it must be obtained from a dietary source. (Tilford et al 2009)

According to author of 'Natural Health Bible for Cats and Dogs,' Borage Oil is often recommended to stimulate the adrenal glands. It can also be of use as an expectorant when suffering from bronchitis. It is also important that, due to omega 6 oils (including borage oil) being pro-inflammatory compounds, that omega 3 oils should be added to the diet for their anti-inflammatory effects. (Messonnier 2001)

Flaxseed is also another highly recognised essential fatty acid. However, unlike fish oil and borage seed oil it contains linoleic acid (LA). As LA needs to be converted into GLA to be of benefit, a specific enzyme is required to carry out this process. Unfortunately, the enzyme required to convert LA into the more useable form GLA is not active in most cats and dogs. Due to this inability to achieve the full value of flaxseed, I chose borage seed oil as it is an active form of GLA which is of great benefit to the health of my pets.

One consideration that should be noted in regards to borage oil, are substances called pyrrolizidine alkaloids (also known as amabiline), which can be toxic to the liver. Therefore, borage oil supplements should be certified free of these alkaloids. Long term, large amounts of borage oil should be avoided. (Livestrong.com 2011)



Nettle contains a natural source of 30% protein, vitamins A, K, C, D, B complex and minerals including calcium, phosphorus, iron and magnesium. Obtaining nutrients from herbs such as nettle, means that a vast array of nutrients can be obtained without stressing the system. All the nutrients are highly absorbable, without overworking the liver and kidneys. Nettle is an anti-inflammatory. It contains a natural histamine, which may work as an anti-allergenic. (Tilford et al 2009)

In regards to long term, regular use, Nettle is more than 99% free of any side effects. Studies have shown Nettle to be very safe. The only precaution is, if the pet is taking anti-inflammatory or blood sugar lowering medications, nettle should be avoided. (Messonnier 2001)

Dandelion leaf has a mild diuretic action, flushing the kidneys whilst also discouraging bacteria from settling in the urinary tract. As a result, this action prevents the formation of urinary tract stone formation. Dandelion also cleanses the liver and improves digestion. (Allegretti et al 2003)

When the body is not eliminating its waste products efficiently, it

leads to heart failure, arthritis, gallbladder disease, kidney stones and pulmonary edema amongst other diseases. Pharmaceutical

diuretics tend to rid the body of what it doesn't need, however, such drugs also tend to rid the body of molecules it does need. As dandelion leaf contains a rich source of potassium, it replaces what is lost in urination. (Tilford et al 2009)

Whilst the leaf of the dandelion is a nutrient and diuretic, the root serves as a liver tonic, assisting in bile production, constipation and arthritis. (Messonnier 2001)

Dandelion is a safe, regular used herb for cats and dogs. However, dandelion should not be used if the animal is being given pharmaceutical diuretics. (Messonnier 2001)

Besides dandelion, *Parsley* is also an excellent (milder than dandelion) diuretic. Parsley also assists the effects of arthritis, it treats anemia and fed in a pulped fresh form, it freshens breath. It has antiseptic qualities and can assist as a diuretic in the early onset of renal failure. Its main uses are for gastric and urinary disorders. However, parsley should not be used if the kidneys are inflamed. Parsley contains an array of nutrients including 22% protein, vitamins A,C,B,K, fibre and minerals including calcium, potassium, iron, magnesium and phosphorus. It is readily available fresh, and can be pulped and added into the regular diet. (Tilford et al 2009)

Important note:

Herbal remedies must work alongside a healthy, fresh produce diet. If your pet is presently on a heavily processed commercial pet food, first change the diet, then introduce the herbal remedies.

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My cat Oliver is almost 19 years old. He was diagnosed with renal disease 6 years ago. He's still doing well, however the kidneys have over time become progressively worse.

There are several diets that I have tried and tested on my cat Oliver. The cooked diets have failed, as he prefers raw, however I do believe there is a place for cooked foods especially when faced with a sick cat that has a loss of appetite. Author of 'The Holistic Cat, advises that whatever the diet, there are several additions that should be incorporated into the diet to assist the renal failure.

They include:

- **Lots of greens**, including peas, red clover, spirulina, barley and wheat grass, sea greens (to boost immune system, supply vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, enzymes and amino acids whilst detoxifying the body.)
- **Dandelion leaves** (which act as a natural diuretic assisting to flush the kidneys) I sprinkle an 1/8 of a capsule into his food or make a weak dandelion tea twice a week, which I put into his drinking water.

- **Probiotics** (increase absorption of essential nutrients kill

Probiotics (increase absorption of essential nutrients, kill harmful bacteria in the gut, maintain healthy gut flora) ½ capsule a day mixed into food.

– **Vitamin B6** (rids the body of excess water whilst assisting to balance sodium and potassium, 5–10mg/day)

– **B complex** (to replace those B vitamins lost in urine) 50–100mg a day, which also boosts appetite.

– **Vitamin C** (boosts the immune system, keeps urine acidic, destroys any bacteria and as it's water soluble, it needs to be replaced) (Pitcairn et al 2005) I add 500mg every day to my cat's food.

– **Cranberry** (acidifies urine, destroys bacterial build up in the urinary tract) My cat doesn't like the taste of this

– **Lecithin granules** (assists to reduce inflammation of the kidneys and tissue repair. Dosage for an adult cat is ½ tsp/day)

– **Pots of fresh wheatgrass** to chew on. My cats enjoy this. (Coscia 2009)

– **Kelp** (high in minerals, benefits kidneys) 1/8 tsp mixed into food. Do not give kelp if your cat or dog is suffering from hyperthyroidism.

– **Fresh parsley** (a natural diuretic providing relief for the kidneys, high in vitamin C) (Brown 2006) Fresh parsley can be finely chopped and mixed in food or bought as a powder and sprinkled into food.

– **Omega 3** such as salmon oil. (reduces inflammation and improve blood flow) 500mg capsule/day

– **Omega 6** such as borage seed oil, evening primrose oil, blackcurrant oil. (Messonnier 2001) 500mg capsule/day

– **Vitamin A** supplement 1000iu/day (acts as a lubricant for the kidneys) (Goldstein 1999) I give my cat several raw egg yolks a week which provides lots of vitamin A

– **Alfalfa** (a very nutritious super green nutrient) I sprinkle an

1/8 capsule into the food each day.

–**Aloe Vera** juice is excellent to use if my cat vomits. It helps to lower the acidity in the esophagus and stomach.

– **Slippery Elm**. This can be bought as a powder. It is very good to use if your cat or dog has been vomiting. Slippery Elm soothes an irritated digestive tract. I give a ¼ capsule of slippery elm mixed with 5ml of aloe vera juice. This can be mixed in a 10ml syringe and fed to your cat or dog.

The above list consists of excellent nutrients I have tried and tested with huge success on my own cat with Renal Disease. However, even these nutrients do not replace any Veterinary medication your pet may also need. Please be sure to incorporate these supplements with veterinary assistance rather than in replacement of.

My cat is stronger and has a greater quality of life because of his raw diet and supplements.

Treating Arthritis

Support for Cats and Dogs with Arthritis

Change the diet!

Introduce raw egg yolks, yoghurt, raw chicken necks, pulped or grated raw vegetables and fruit (in particular berries which are high in antioxidants).

**Please see my recipe page for the full raw diet.*

if your pet is **not getting raw meaty bones in the diet such as chicken legs, wings, carcasses then its important to add calcium to the food.*

For every 150 grams of raw meat (without bone), add 300mg calcium carbonate powder

Start introducing the following supplements, (all available at a good Natural Health Food Shop).

Supplement Dosage per 5kg of body weight

Glucosamine and Chondroitin 500mg

MSM (methyl sulfonyl methane) 50mg

Vitamin C (ester C non acidic) min 100mg

Vitamin E 100iu

Vitamin A 2000iu

Fish oil (salmon or cod liver oil) 1 tsp

Omega 6 oil 1 tsp

(blackcurrant oil, flaxseed oil, evening primrose oil)

SOD (superoxide dismutase) 50mg

Another great supplement is an all green supplement that is composed of, for example: spirulina, chlorella, barley grass, wheatgrass and alfalfa. Some health food shops sell this as a complete powder called 'Supergreens' or 'Vitagreens.' Half a teaspoon (to every 10kg body weight) of this added to the diet each day, will work wonders and complement the raw food diet.

After 4-8 weeks you should see changes in your pet's movements, activity levels and general disposition. At this time you can try reducing the amount of veterinary drugs that have been prescribed such as Metacam (an anti-inflammatory non steroidal drug) or the corticosteroid drugs for the more severe cases. The quicker you can get your pet off these drugs the better.

However until the diet is dramatically changed and supplements have been implemented on a daily basis for several weeks, the drugs will be necessary for your pet to deal with it's inflammation, pain and discomfort.

Massage the sore joints as much the animal will let you. This will get the blood flowing to the area and help to move toxins that have accumulated in the joints.

Acupuncture works wonders for pets with arthritis. There are some vets who offer this in Dubai. Modern Vet Clinic on Al Wasl Road and the Blue Oasis in the Green Community.





Oliver enjoying his acupuncture treatment at Blue Oasis Vet Clinic, Dubai.

All of the advice I have given has come from years of practice, research and watching animals that were in pain with debilitating arthritis improve dramatically after 4-8 weeks of treatment.

Taken in conjunction with veterinary prescription drugs none of the above will in any way harm your pet.

Veterinary drugs such as anti-inflammatories and corticosteroids will however, over the long term, damage your pet's liver, kidneys, the cardiovascular system, cause stomach ulcers, high blood pressure, weight gain, suppression of the immune system to name but a few.

Switch the diet, go shopping for all of the above supplements and give your pet a new life!
