



This article may be reprinted without further permission when brought in its entirety, including the bio the end.

June 8, 2003

How you can avoid detoxification problems when shifting your dog's diet...

(This article is also available as a simple [text file version](#))

Ever been feeding your dog a biologically inadequate diet (like commercial kibble of any kind)? Ever decided to shift to something better (like a raw natural diet)? You will expect, then, to see general health improvements as a result of the new and better diet, right?

However, most people get shocked when they instead experience a *noticeable temporary decrease in wellness* the first few days after the shift!

The process behind this is known as **detoxification** - and it can become a serious health issue. The worst part of it is that it might make you think that your new diet is wrong....

Well, the fact of a smoker getting sick when trying to quit "cold turkey" does not make smoking healthy, though. It is the same with diets.

Accumulating "substitutes" when lacking a needed nutrient

During times of a nutritious inadequate feeding, the body will accumulate a lot of "bad stuff" in the organs and the depots, lacking access to the "good stuff" it needs. When you now suddenly let it have access to all the "good stuff", it wants to rid itself of all the "bad stuff".

This will create a sudden increase of the concentration of all the "bad stuff" in the blood and in the organs that are supposed to deal with the discharge of this waste, primarily the kidneys and the liver. This concentration of "bad stuff" could very easily exceed the limits for what the body can handle without stress....

When you feed a diet that is *not* made of raw, natural components, this is prone to happen. Heat processing of raw meat is known to destroy at least 30 fundamental nutrients the dog needs as badly as we need vitamins. Lacking access to those prime nutrients, the body will instead try to "do the best it can" with whatever else is available. So, when you now shift to a healthy natural diet, you get problems...

Just imagine this: you built a house with low-quality building materials. Suddenly, you get access to the building materials you always wanted. You instantly start the process of replacing the old low-quality materials with the new ones that are much better for the purpose! In the process, you create a lot of debris you need to get rid of - and you may have some temporary problems finding a place to store that waste until you can haul it to the dump!

Neutralizing an incoming poison

Another example of different nature is Nicotine. We all know that Nicotine has a whole range of very negative effects on the body. In order to deal with this poison, the body generates some big anti-bodies of protein molecules that create a bond with the Nicotine and thus neutralize it.

When you continuously supply Nicotine to the body, the body will try to "keep up" with the intake by programming itself to a steady production of those anti-bodies. And to make it worse: it takes a lot of time (several months) to establish this process at full efficiency - as it takes several months to dismantle it..

Now, if this anti-body protein were harmless, we would have no trouble. But it isn't. It is actually almost as toxic for the body as the Nicotine was.... When you stop the Nicotine supply, the body now has to deal with this over-production of anti-bodies that cannot be stopped as quickly as you quit smoking.... The result is an unpleasant poisoning of the body with its own antibodies! All smokers who have tried to quit know what this feels like...

All kibble products and canned food products have been preserved with poisons that are labeled as "preservation chemicals", and they are at least as harmful to the body as Nicotine, often much worse....

Avoiding the problems altogether...

If you are not prepared for the detoxification process, you might experience that the dog gets sick from the natural food!!!! But reality is that you are just now paying the price for your toxic feeding in the past....

However, it is simple to prevent it. All it takes is that you introduce the new diet and its good nutrients *slowly*, over some time. This way, the body can discharge all the accumulated toxins and adjust its own antibody productions at a more tolerable speed that will not stress the internal organs.

You can use a "transition period" that is two weeks for every year the dog has been fed kibble, yet never more than three months. The specific math you need to use to manage such a gradual transition does not need to be overly precise. Dividing the "transition period" into four phases with different ratios of old/new diet will generally do the job in a way that leaves the dog with no trauma when shifting it to a natural diet.

Mogens Eliassen

Mogens Eliassen holds a Ph.D. level degree in Chemistry from Århus University, Denmark and has 30+ years of experience working with dogs, dog owners, dog trainers, and holistic veterinarians as a coach, lecturer, and education system developer. He publishes a free newsletter "[The Peeing Post](#)" containing lots of tips and advice on dog problems of all kinds, particularly about training, behavioral problems, feeding, and health care.

For more information about Mogens Eliassen, including links to other articles he has published, please send a short e-mail to contact@k9joy.com.