

犬と猫の食事について

東田獣医科

村上義久

今回は犬と猫の食事についてお話しをしていきたいと思います。実際に犬や猫を飼われている皆さんにはこれから書く事はすでにご存知だと思いますが、一番大切な食事についてもう一度考えて直してみます。さて、はじめに犬は本来何を食べて生きてきたのでしょうか？草を主に食べている草食性、何でも食べる雑食性、肉類を主に食べる肉食性。答えは、雑食性です。ですから栄養をつける、スタミナをつける、という意味で肉類ばかりをあげるのは少しも犬達にとって良くありません。飼い主さんが自分の飼っている犬を大切にしているつもりでも、かえって悪影響を与える事にもなりかねません。

次に、猫は本来何を食べていたのでしょうか？草食性、肉食性、雑食性。答えは、肉食性です。それでは、猫達には私達が食べている肉類や魚類だけを与えれば良いのでしょうか。猫はネズミなどの小動物の肝臓や骨、内臓、腸管の中の内容物などを含めて丸ごと食べて生きてきたのです。ですから、私達が与える肉類とは少し違った物となります。よって犬に猫用の食事を与えると肉類が多く含まれているので良く食べますが、犬達にとっては良くなりカロリーが多すぎる事になります。逆に猫に犬用の食事をあげると色々な物の不足が起こります。良く食べるという理由だけで良い食事とは言えないのです。

ここで栄養素について勉強してみましょう。栄養素には蛋白質、炭水化物、脂肪、ビタミン、ミネラルがあります。蛋白質の主な働きは身体を動かすエネルギー、酵素、ホルモン、色々な種類の分泌物や身体の組織、そしてそれを防御する組織を作り上げる働きがあります。炭水化物は主にエネルギー源として働きます。脂肪は主にエネルギー源として働き、脂溶性ビタミンA,D,E,Kの吸収を助け、食物に対する食いつきを高めたりします。ビタミンは主に身体の色々な働きに対して調節します。ミネラルは骨格を作り細胞の一般的な機能や神経、筋肉の収縮を活発にさせたりします。

また、身体を動かすエネルギーとして蛋白質、炭水化物は1g当り約4kcalを産生し脂肪は約9kcalを産生しますので一般に太りすぎて減量を行う場合脂肪の量を減らすと効率良く減量を行うことが出来ますし、食の細い子などは脂肪を増やしてあげる事によって効率良く身体を維持することが出来ます。

では一体良い食事とはどのような物でしょう。一番大切な事は人と同じ様に犬達、

Diets for Dogs & Cats

I expect that most of you who keep dogs or cats will already know what I am going to talk about in the following paragraphs, but since diet is so important for pets and their owners, the subject is well worth repeating.

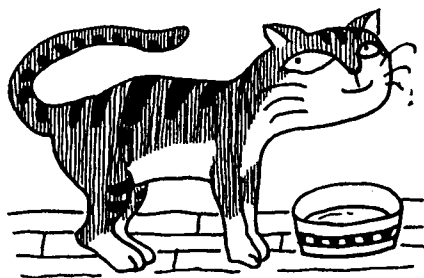
First of all, what sort of things do dogs eat when they live in the wild? Are they herbivores that eat mainly grass, omnivores that eat almost anything, or carnivores that mostly eat meat? The answer is that dogs are omnivores. For this reason feeding dogs on meat alone isn't a good idea at all from the standpoint of providing nutrition or stamina. Although dog owners may do so in the belief that they are taking good care of their pets, lack of variety in the diet can actually have a negative effect on the health of dogs.

And what sort of things do cats eat in the wild? Are they herbivorous, carnivorous or omnivorous? The answer is that cats are carnivorous. So does this mean that it is OK to feed cats only on the kinds of meat and fish that we eat? The ancestors of today's cats used to live by eating mice and other small animals. They ate the entire animal, including the liver, bones,

internal organs, and the intestines, as well as their contents. This is rather different from the kind of meat that we tend to provide. Because catfood contains lots of different kinds of meat, dogs will eat it enthusiastically if you give it to them, but it is not a good idea to feed dogs on catfood as it contains too many calories for dogs. On the contrary, if cats are fed on dogfood their diet will be deficient in a number of respects. While they may eat enough to fill their stomachs, they won't be getting a well-balanced diet.

Let's move onto the subject of nutrients. There are many different nutrients including proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and minerals. Many kinds of proteins are found in living organism where they play a number of vital roles including supplying energy to power the body, governing the transport of oxygen, hormones and various secretions, and protecting the body against disease, etc. Carbohydrates are mostly used as an energy source. Likewise, fats are primarily used for energy, but they also help the body absorb vitamins A, D, E and K, and they help stimulate the appetite.

Vitamins perform several important functions related to maintaining good health. And minerals help build bones, assist many kinds of general cell functions and activate nerves and muscle contractions, etc. Also, the amount of energy available for the body to utilize in one gram of protein or carbohydrate is about 4 kcal, while one gram of fat contains about 9 kcal. This is why reducing the amount of fat in the diet can be an effective way for overweight people or animals to lose weight, and also why increasing the amount of fat in the diet of children who are fussy about what they eat can have a good effect in strengthening their bodies.



猫達にとって蛋白質、脂肪、炭水化物、ミネラル、ビタミンといった栄養素がバランス良く含まれているという事です。しかし、スーパーマーケットなどに行くとたくさんのペットフードが並んでいてその中から良い物を選ぶという事は大変な事です。そこで実際に飼い主さんがペットフードを選ぶ簡単なポイントについてお話ししましょう。人と同じ様に動物も子供の時は身体をつくる為に生きていく為のカロリーが必要ですから多くのカロリーが必要ですし、次ぎに大人になると身体を維持する為に生きていく為のカロリーが必要ですので子供の時期よりはカロリーが少なくて済みます。また高齢になると更にカロリーが少なくて良く、その反面で消化し易く、蛋白質、塩分が控えめなものをお勧めします。

So, what kind of food do we mean by a good diet? The most important thing to remember is that like humans, cats and dogs require a diet that includes a suitable balance of proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and minerals. However, choosing a suitable diet for your pet from the huge range of petfoods available at the local supermarket can be a difficult task. So owners would do well to bear in mind a simple point when selecting food for their pets. Just like humans, when animals are growing they use calories for building their bodies and also for living, so they need to eat plenty of calories. But as mature adults they use calories only for maintaining their bodies and for living, so they need less calories overall. Moreover, as they get older, their calorie requirements decrease further, and they should also be fed on food that is easier to digest and contains lower levels of fat and salt.