



## In this month's issue



Photos by Julie Gordon Photography

### 1 PET FOOD: Premium Brands vs Supermarket Pet Food

With so many brands and types of pet food available it can be very difficult to know what meal is the best one for your pet. In recent years there has been a huge amount of research into pet nutrition, resulting in production of diets which provide all your pets needs. But what is the best?

### 2 SELF-MEDICATING YOUR PETS – A Big No-No!

Avoid self-medicating your pet with over the counter medications without first consulting your veterinarian. Some human medications can have unpleasant side effects or, in some cases, be fatal without treatment

### 3 SHOULD YOU DESEX YOUR PET?

More than 90 per cent of Australia's registered dogs are desexed, which shows that most owners who are responsible enough to register their four-legged friends are also responsible enough to have them desexed.

## Pet Food: Premium Brands vs Supermarket Pet Food

**Supermarket:** Supermarket pet foods tend to have a flexible ingredient formula, depending on what is most cheaply available. Ingredient lists often use general terms such as meat and meat by-products, cereals, cereal by-products and vegetable proteins without stating the actual source. One batch of food may be completely different from the next. This may explain some gastrointestinal upset that pets may get when their diets have apparently not been changed. Cheaper ingredients result in reduced palatability, digestibility and a larger volume of stools with more odour. Artificial colours and flavour enhancers are often used and the balance of fatty acids, vital for a healthy skin and coat, may not be optimal.

**Premium:** Veterinary recommended premium pet foods are quality pet foods available from veterinary clinics and some pet food stores. They are available in formulations to suit pets of all sizes, ages and activity levels, such as kitten and puppies, adult and low calorie, in both tinned and dried varieties.

They have a variety of nutritional benefits for your dog such as:-

High grade quality protein which is primarily derived from meat (rather than cereal). Meat based protein is highly palatable and easy for dogs and cats to digest. Optimal fibre levels. Too much



dietary fibre results in reduced digestibility and interferes with the absorption of other good nutrients. Optimal essential fatty acid levels - Important to maintain healthy skin and coat, control inflammation and reduce itching due to allergies. Highly digestible diets resulting in a small volume of stools with less smell. Highly palatable which means less waste through uneaten food. Available in special formulations that provide therapeutic nutrition for pets with specific diseases and disorders (e.g. Kidney disease).

Source: <http://adelaidevet.com.au/pet-library/feeding/>





## Hill's™ Science Diet™ VetEssentials™ – addressing pets' essential health needs Specially formulated to support healthy growth and development

### Adult Oral Health

#### CANINE & FELINE ADULT

**NUTRITIONAL FEATURE:** Clinically proven kibble technology naturally scrubs teeth clean like a toothbrush reducing plaque and tartar build-up

**HEALTH BENEFIT:** Keeps teeth and gums healthy

**KEY NUTRIENT:** Natural vegetable fibre

### Weight Management

#### PUPPY & KITTEN

**NUTRITIONAL FEATURE:** Precisely balanced nutrition and high quality protein

**HEALTH BENEFIT:** Helps achieve ideal body weight and ensures optimal growth and development

**KEY NUTRIENT:** High quality protein

#### CANINE & FELINE ADULT

**NUTRITIONAL FEATURE:** Fibre-enriched formula enhanced with L-carnitine

**HEALTH BENEFIT:** Helps maintain optimal body weight, build lean muscle and convert fat into energy

**KEY NUTRIENTS:** Natural vegetable fibre and added L carnitine

### Joint Health

#### PUPPY

**NUTRITIONAL FEATURE:** Supplies clinically tested levels of omega fatty acids and provides the building blocks for healthy joints and cartilage with natural sources of glucosamine and chondroitin

**HEALTH BENEFIT:** Promotes healthy joint development and enhanced mobility

**KEY NUTRIENT:** Omega fatty acids with natural glucosamine and chondroitin

#### CANINE ADULT

**NUTRITIONAL FEATURE:** Enhanced with natural glucosamine and chondroitin

**HEALTH BENEFIT:** Provides the building blocks for healthy joints and cartilage

**KEY NUTRIENTS:** Natural glucosamine and chondroitin

### Healthy Digestion

#### PUPPY & KITTEN

**NUTRITIONAL FEATURE:** Optimal fibre mixture

**HEALTH BENEFIT:** Helps maintain a healthy digestive tract and firm stools

**KEY NUTRIENT:** Natural vegetable fibre

#### CANINE & FELINE ADULT

**NUTRITIONAL FEATURE:** High quality, digestible ingredients

**HEALTH BENEFIT:** Helps maximise absorption of key nutrients

**KEY NUTRIENT:** High quality ingredients Feline Bladder Health

### Feline Bladder Health

#### KITTEN

**NUTRITIONAL FEATURE:** Appropriate mineral balance

**HEALTH BENEFIT:** Supports the development of a healthy bladder

**KEY NUTRIENTS:** Controlled levels of magnesium and phosphorus

#### FELINE ADULT

**NUTRITIONAL FEATURE:** Appropriate mineral balance

**HEALTH BENEFIT:** Helps adult cats maintain a healthy bladder

**KEY NUTRIENTS:** Low magnesium and controlled phosphorus

### Skin & Coat Health

**NUTRITIONAL FEATURE:** Omega fatty acids nourish skin cells and hair follicles to rejuvenate the skin.

**HEALTH BENEFIT:** Promotes healthy skin and a luxurious coat

**KEY NUTRIENT:** Omega fatty acids

### Immunity

#### PUPPY & KITTEN

**NUTRITIONAL FEATURE:** Optimal levels of clinically proven antioxidants

**HEALTH BENEFIT:** Supports the immune system between vaccinations and helps build a healthy immune system

**KEY NUTRIENTS:** Vitamins E and C





## Top Human Drugs That Poison Pets

For all pet owners, it is very important to realize that some human drugs can be poisonous to their pets. Given that most households stock a number of medications, knowing the drugs to watch out for can help minimize the risk of accidentally poisoning your pet.

**NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs):** These are common pain-relieving medications we all keep around the house. Whether you refer to them by brand name (e.g. Voltaren) or by generic (ibuprofen, diclofenac), these medications are very dangerous to pets. Most pets will experience stomach and intestinal upsets, with gastric ulcers being common. Some NSAIDs can also cause kidney or liver damage. Toxic doses vary. If your pet has consumed any amount of human NSAIDs, contact your veterinarian immediately. Given daily, NSAIDs will certainly cause potentially fatal gastric ulceration.

**Antidepressants:** As we begin to understand more of how chemical imbalances can affect our moods and our mental stability, an increasing number of Australians are now taking these drugs. Examples include: Prozac, and Zoloft. Vomiting and lethargy are common symptoms of an overdose. In some cases, a condition known as serotonin syndrome can occur. Pets will exhibit elevated body temperatures, increased heart rates and blood pressure as well as disorientation and vocalization. Toxic doses vary. Contact your veterinarian if your pet ingests any of these drugs.

**Acetaminophen (Aspirin):** One of the most common pain relievers in Australia is Aspirin and it may be great for us, but it can be deadly to cats. Dogs are also affected, but often not to this extreme. Dogs can experience liver damage and occasionally red blood cell damage. A single extra strength Aspirin has been known to kill cats.

**Methylphenidate (Ritalin):** This medication is used for treating attention-deficit, hyperactivity disorder. This medication can elevate a pet's heart rate to a dangerous level and has the potential to cause abnormal heart rhythms and seizures. As little as 5 mg can be fatal.

**Pseudoephedrine:** This very popular decongestant is found in a variety of cold and sinus products (Dimetapp, Sudafed, etc.). It acts as a stimulant to dogs and cats, and your pets will act hyperactive. Head bobbing, agitation, tremors and seizures are all common. Toxic doses: Clinical signs can be seen in dogs up to 4.5kg ingesting a single 12 hour Sudafed.

**Anti-diabetic medications: Glipizide (GlucotrolR), gliclazide, and glyburide (MicronaseR):** These belong to a class of drugs known as sulphonylureas. These tablets work by stimulating the pancreas to produce more insulin. Medications like glipizide and glyburide can cause sudden and major drops in blood sugar of pets. Symptoms include disorientation, lack of coordination, and seizures. Toxic doses: Cats exhibit liver problems at higher doses. Toxic dosages vary according to the size of the pet; however any exposure is dangerous. For glipizide, poisoning occurs most often after ingestion of larger amounts. Glyburide and gliclazide are longer lasting medications and smaller dosages result in prolonged low blood sugar and complications thereof.



This article provides general advice only. For specific advice regarding your pet please speak to your veterinarian.

Sourced: [petdoctor.com.au/miscellaneous](http://petdoctor.com.au/miscellaneous)

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## Should you desex your pet

Spaying, desexing, and neutering your pets is a general term that refers to a process of ovariectomy in females and castration in males to ensure they cannot have offspring. This procedure has a wealth of health benefits.

### Controlling the overpopulation of cats and dogs

Millions of cats and dogs are put to sleep each year because they are not adopted from animal shelters. In the long term, it is more humane and beneficial to control the population of cats and dogs by spaying or neutering to ensure that a perfectly healthy animal doesn't get euthanased simply because there isn't a home for them.

### Desexing helps dogs live longer, and behave better

On average, spaying or neutering your dog can actually increase their lifespan by 1 to 3 years. Your dog may also behave better by being spayed or neutered because you won't have to deal with male pets marking their territory on your new curtains or furniture. You also won't have to deal with your female dog going into heat, which can cause her to urinate frequently everywhere, vocalise incessantly, and run away from home in search of a mate.

### Desexing your pet significantly lowers their risk of cancer

The risk of cancer in un-sprayed or un-neutered pets is much higher. In male dogs, the risk testicular of cancer is eliminated after they are castrated.

Female dogs that haven't been desexed, have a much higher risk of getting a variety of cancers including breast (mammary) cancer, uterine or ovarian cancer, and a nasty condition called pyometra (infection in the uterus). Once your dog is spayed or neutered, however, they have a much better chance of living healthier with less risk of contracting these debilitating cancers.

Desexing your pet may reduce the likelihood of your dog developing aggressive behaviours ordinarily caused by hormonal fluctuations and mating competition. This benefit isn't restricted to the male gender. Female dogs can be quite aggressive due to hormonal changes during their cycles and during heat. Spaying females may help to limit or eliminate these aggressive tendencies.

Desexing your dog may give them more focus allowing them to become more amenable to training. Pet parents often report that they find their dog less distracted, and more focused, once they have been desexed. This is likely to be related to the drop in the sex-related hormones, such as oestrogen and testosterone.

Final thoughts- Overall, there are many benefits to spaying or neutering your dog. From a health and behavioural perspective, to community benefits and responsibility, it's within everyone's best interests to desex their pets at an appropriate age.

Source: <http://www.vetico.com.au/blog/5-health-benefits-of-desexing-spaying-your-dog-641>

# WELLNESS PROGRAMS

for CATS and Dogs of all ages. Choices of programs with payment via monthly direct debit.

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By receiving discounts on your pets veterinary care

Programs designed to make high quality preventative care affordable, helping our pets' live longer and happier lives.

