



# Fall Newsletter 2014 Gorham Animal Hospital

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With Halloween fast approaching we wish all of our clients a Happy Halloween. Below are some tips/tricks and even some treats!

- Please keep black cats safely inside! Black cats are a large target for abuse on Halloween. Did you know, black cats are also the last ones adopted?
- Keep pets locked up or leashed. When you're constantly opening your door for trick-or-treaters it is easy for your pet to accidentally sneak out. It is a good idea to have your pet's microchipped so that if they get out they are more likely to make it home.
- Bake your canned pet food to make special cookies for your pets. This is especially helpful for pets on prescription diets!



## Chocolate Toxicity

Cats and dogs are susceptible to poisoning from eating chocolate. The poisoning is due to a chemical toxicity to methylxanthine (like theobromine and caffeine). The less sweet and the darker the chocolate, the more toxic the chocolate is to your pet. The result of your pet ingesting chocolate substances can be; vomiting, diarrhea, hyperactivity, inflammation of the pancreas (i.e., pancreatitis), an abnormal heart rhythm, seizures, and rarely even death. If your pets eat the wrapper (in a small dog, or cat) this can result in secondary obstructions in the stomach, and intestines. The best thing to do is keep chocolate locked up from a pets access. If your pet ingests chocolate please call us immediately.



## In this issue

- Chocolate Toxicity
- Halloween tips and tricks
- Rodent poisoning
- Treat recipe
- Nutrition and your pet part 1

### Recipe: Treats Not Tricks!

Using your pets canned food-

1. Mold your canned food into bite sized pieces.
2. Place bite sized pieces onto an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake at 350F for 30 min or until crispy.
3. Let cool before you let your pet enjoy



Store in the Fridge and discard after 5-7 days.

## Nutrition and your pet part 1

Just like your fingerprints your pet's specific nutritional needs are unique and change as they mature. For example a working dog or growing kitten or puppy will need more calories in its diet than your senior stay at home dog. Feeding too many calories can lead to obesity, linked to both diabetes and hip dysplasia. Large breed puppy foods have been formulated with the high risk of hip dysplasia in mind. Small dog breed diets reflect their high rate of urinary tract disease and occurrence of dental disease.

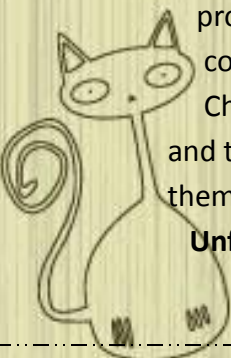
One of the common errors we see with non veterinary food is the term "all life stage diet". Clearly it does not make sense that one diet will meet our pets changing nutritional requirements. Age related disease, often manifesting in pets over the age of seven, can also be addressed through diet recommendations. These diets have been shown to prolong the quality and quantity of a pet's life. In a recent study they have established that the most expensive pet food is now found at a pet store. Prescription diets are now in the middle range for cost. **Paying more for your food does not mean that the ingredients are necessarily better.**

Natural or organic labeling is misleading. The AAFCO definition "Natural" is "any ingredient which has not been chemically altered". This means that any diet that has added vitamins and minerals, which are essential to creating a balanced diet for your pet, are not considered "natural". Organic labeling can be applied, even if only ONE ingredient is organic. There are currently no requirements to allow a company to put the word "holistic" on a label. As with all diets, these "Natural" and "Organic" ingredients can still be subjected to contamination by moulds and yeast, and are not necessarily superior to other diets in meeting their nutritional requirements.

Pet food labels are regulated, sort of. The regulation states that food must be listed in order of weight (prior to processing), the heaviest items being first. Ingredients with high water content such as fresh meats and vegetables will be listed higher than comparable amounts of dry ingredients even though they may add fewer nutrients to the overall diet. Pet food labels can also be more deceiving if they list several forms of the same ingredient or related ingredients separately. For example - corn, corn bran, corn feed meal, corn flour, corn germ meal, corn gluten meal, corn grits. The Guaranteed Analysis is a quantitative analysis performed in a laboratory; however it does not give any information on the quality of the ingredients used.

For example; hair, feathers, chicken feet and beaks are high in crude protein, but have little nutrient value for your pet. Poultry meal is a common item found in some pet store foods. The cost of a high end Chicken meal is much higher than the cost of a low end poultry meal- and the digestibility and the nutrients your pet obtains from ingesting them is also much higher. Pets need nutrients not ingredients!

**Unfortunately you cannot determine the quality of the ingredients or the nutritional value of each ingredient by a pet food label or by cost.**





The amount of stool a pet produces is a subtle way of assessing the digestibility of a diet.

Being made in Canada, means that ingredients are purchased within Canada, not necessarily that those ingredients haven't been imported from another country.

Did you know that cats are carnivores? This means that cats **MUST** have meat in their diet to survive.

Dogs are omnivores. Dogs need a balanced diet of proteins, carbohydrates and vitamins from a variety of sources, such as meats, vegetables and grains to meet their nutritional requirements. Domestic dogs vary in their genetic makeup and are able to digesting grains to obtain the carbohydrates they require to survive, differing from wolves.

Nutritional recommendations should be made individualized to your pet. Their breed, age, and previous health history will influence diet recommendations. Choosing a suitable diet ensures that their nutritional requirements are met and that breed related health issues are minimized. The prescription diets enable our pets to live longer more comfortable lives, and we get to share additional time with them!! Although dry foods are recommended for dental health, increasing the amount of water fed through canned foods has been shown to aid in the prevention of urinary disease.

The diets sold through Gorham Animal Hospital are from companies doing continuing nutritional research. They guarantee their products, even for palatability. Lastly, and most importantly, they have been shown to increase the quality of a pet's life and aid in the management and treatment of disease. These companies have supported their diets, and their clients as demonstrated by their historical actions. Especially with previous recalls.

The Gorham Animal Hospital veterinarians and staff are constantly striving to stay up to date on the dietary changes and diets available through ongoing courses.

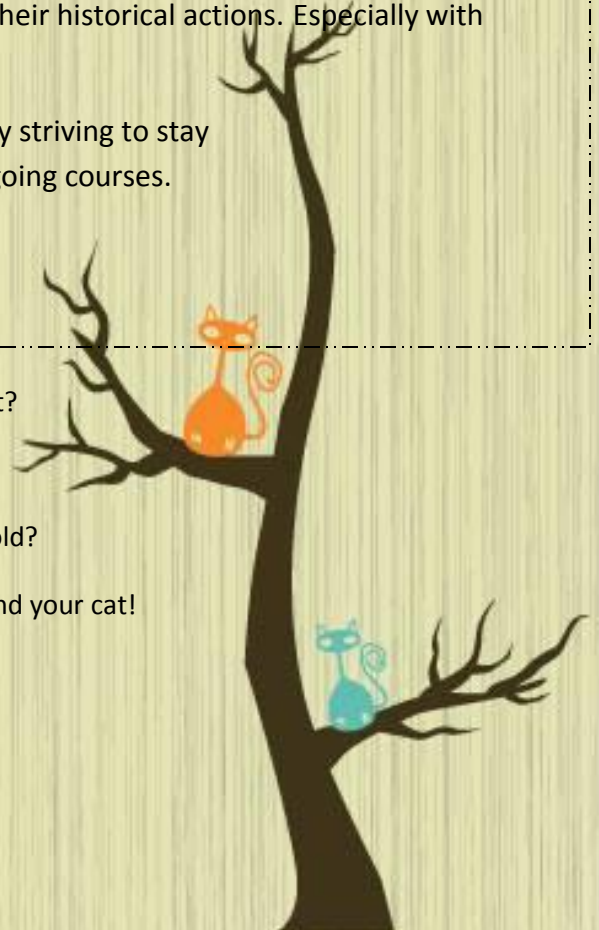
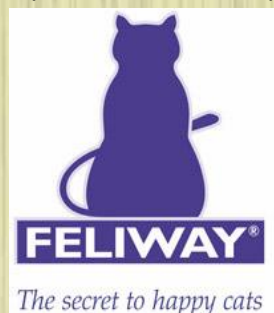
Please contact us if you have any questions about your pet food, and what the right food for your pet may be.

Do you have a scared cat? Anxious cat?

Aggressive cat?

Cat who sprays? Or a multi cat household?

Ask us about Feliway and how it can help you and your cat!





**DANGER**  
**POISON**

# Rodent Poison And Your Pets

With the cold temperatures come nuisance animals, such as mice and rats. Unfortunately many of these animals flock towards the warmth of your home/cottage. This leads to many people using rodent poison. Many dogs find the smell of the poison just as appetizing as the rodents do. This unfortunately leads to your pet deciding that the poison would make a great snack. Sometimes Cats will catch a rodent who has ingested the poison, and then ingest the rodent. This leads to your cat getting secondhand poisoning, which can be just as deadly.

Many rodent poisons work by decreasing the production of blood clotting factors. It does this by interfering with the body's reserves of Vitamin K. Luckily this vitamin can be manufactured in the intestine by bacteria, but once rodent poison has been ingested the body is no longer able to produce enough Vitamin K to prevent anemia.

If your animal ingests any poison you need to get them to your vet immediately. It is also beneficial to bring the packaging from the rodent poison, or any other ingested drugs/poisons, with you. This can help determine the best method of treatment for your pet. Normally your pet will need Vitamin K injections for several months after ingestion. In severe cases your pet may also need blood transfusions. The treatment for rodent poisoning can be potentially life threatening.

The best thing to do is NOT use any rodent poison but stick with the live traps, snap traps, or ultrasonic deterrents. Rodent-proofing and encouraging natural predators will also reduce the amount of rodents. To encourage natural predators, nesting boxes and perches for owls, and hawks can be installed around your homes.

\*\*Antifreeze also entices pets with its sweet taste! Make sure your Antifreeze is always stored safely from your pets. \*\*



Harley:

A 3 year old boxer, who ingested Rodentex box included! Luckily he was brought to us quickly and is undergoing vitamin K injections currently. He feels good and is smiling!

