



**John Burns** BVMS MRCVS

The idea for **Burns Pet Nutrition** came while working as a Veterinary Surgeon in general practice during the early 90s. I noticed that many pets were suffering from the same ailments time and time again. Believing poor diet to be the primary cause, I recommended that clients feed their dogs home-cooked food to allow the body to function naturally, free from a build-up of toxic waste.

Of course, feeding home-cooked food is a time consuming business, and back in 1993 no brand of healthy pet food existed. This motivated me to develop my own **Original** dry food recipe based on chicken, brown rice and vegetables.

The concept was simple - a complete ready-made diet containing all the benefits of home cooked food.

25 years on, we have a diverse clientele of happy and healthy pets and our product range has evolved to include a number of high-quality diets for dogs, cats and rabbits.

*John Burns*  
Veterinary Surgeon **John Burns** BVMS MRCVS

## What are the anal glands?

The anal glands are located on either side of the anus. They usually contain a foul-smelling matter which is expelled at urination and/or defecation and acts as a territory marker. A secondary function of these glands is to act as the body's dustbin in that they are a means of collecting and discharging waste from the system.

## Symptoms of full anal glands?

Scotching (rubbing the bottom on the floor), and an itchy/smelly bottom are signs that your dog has full anal glands. In extreme cases an abscess may form in the anal gland; this is painful and may bleed and exude pus.

## What causes full anal glands?

Build-up of toxic waste in the system is, in my opinion, the major cause of anal gland problems. Production and elimination of waste products (toxins) is part of normal metabolism. However, if waste production is excessive, these wastes accumulate in the system.

The anal glands fill up as the system attempts to expel the waste.

The problem is **NOT**, in my opinion, caused by lack of bulky stools.

### There are several potential causes of this excess waste production:

- **Poor quality food** – e.g. unsuitable ingredients; chemical additives.
- **Overfeeding** – even of high quality food.
- **Excessive intake of protein and fat** – both of which produce more waste than carbohydrate.
- **Food allergy/intolerance** – which cause inflammation, cell damage and production of toxins.



You can read more about how toxins damage health in my **Veterinary Guide to Natural Healthcare** (pp 4 -6 Development of Disease).

## How can diet help?

**All of the potential causes mentioned here need to be addressed!**

**Wholesome foods**, based on complex carbohydrates, low in fat and protein and free from additives (other than essential vitamins and minerals), fed sparingly, can avoid the build-up of toxic waste in the system which can cause full anal glands. (See my **Veterinary Guide to Natural Healthcare** (pp. 26-27).

Feeding a complete, high quality, balanced diet at the right quantities should aim to stop the anal glands from filling up. When changing to a new diet that meets these requirements it is important to remember that the body will need time to essentially detox and adjust to the change.

We would recommend staying on a new diet for a full 3 months to allow you to make an informed decision.

During this time, you may find that they still may need their glands emptied once or twice.

## What can cause full anal glands?

- **Poor quality food**
- **Overfeeding**
- **Food allergy/intolerance**
- **Excess protein & fat**
- **Chemicals**

Toxic waste  
build-up

Full  
anal  
glands

The **Burns Health and Nutrition Team** (see back of leaflet) can give you individually tailored advice on finding the right food and the right feeding amounts for your dog

**Or...**

See my **Daily Feeding Amounts** leaflet.

Download it from the Burns website:

([www.burnspet.co.uk](http://www.burnspet.co.uk)) or request a paper copy.



Below is a checklist to help you evaluate and make an informed decision regarding the suitability of a diet...

Key consideration checklist:

Is the diet highly digestible? .....	Yes	No
Does it have controlled levels of protein and fat? .....	Yes	No
Are the ingredients high quality? .....	Yes	No
Does the food contain chemical additives or preservatives? ...	Yes	No
Is the diet complete? .....	Yes	No
Is the diet hypoallergenic? .....	Yes	No
Is the diet balanced? .....	Yes	No
Does the diet have an identifiable protein source? .....	Yes	No
Are the ingredients natural? .....	Yes	No
Are any of the ingredients artificial? .....	Yes	No

Top tip!

Keeping your dog lean and healthy can help to avoid anal gland problems as any extra fat around the glands may make them more difficult to empty. Remember, you should always be able to feel your dogs ribs.

Remember, it is just as important to feed the correct amount as it is to be on a high quality diet as over feeding even a high quality diet can be counterproductive when addressing anal gland issues.

Support when you need it

Our expert pet nutritionists can give you straightforward and individually tailored advice on managing nutritional support for specific health problems or fine tuning feeding amounts.



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Promotes excellent health, and for dogs prone to...

- Itchy skin/ears/feet
- Upset digestion
- Poo eating
- Weight problems
- Bad breath
- Body odour
- Full anal glands
- Persistent moulting
- Behaviour problems
- Lack of vitality
- Stiffness
- Tear staining
- Fussy eating
- Tooth tartar

All of these may be diet related

This leaflet is part of a series on health and nutrition written by John Burns.

For more information please see my **Veterinary Guide to Natural Healthcare** booklet which can be downloaded from [www.burnspet.co.uk](http://www.burnspet.co.uk) or request a paper copy



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THE VETERINARY GUIDE TO  
FULL ANAL GLANDS

By John Burns BVMS MRCVS

