



**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

## Symptoms of upset digestion

*The common symptoms of digestive problems are loose bowel motions, occasional vomiting, abdominal discomfort or swelling, flatulence, passing of blood or mucus or straining.*

### What causes upset digestion?

Whatever name is given to the disorder, be it colitis, gastro-enteritis, indigestion, allergy, infection, etc., persistent or recurring upset to the digestive system is usually caused by a diet which is unsuitable in some way.

- Food made using ingredients of low quality or poor digestibility is a major problem
- Overfeeding aggravates the problem by reducing digestibility and putting more demands on the digestive system.
- Allergy/intolerance to a food ingredient should always be considered as a possible cause of a persistent problem.
- High fat content and chemical additives such as colourings are other possible causes.



### How much food should I give?

Overfeeding contributes to the toxic burden so must be avoided. Recommended feeding amounts should be treated with caution as every dog is an individual with different needs from all others. Weighing the food each time is more accurate and effective than going by eye.

Many pet owners believe that they cannot be overfeeding as their pet is not overweight. Very often that is not correct; waste products can accumulate in the system of a dog which is of normal weight.

**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

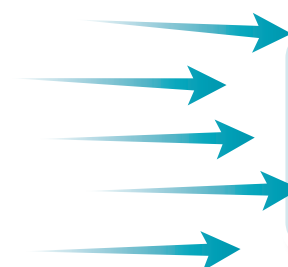
**Or...**

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.



### What can cause upset digestion?

- Poor quality food
- Poor digestibility
- Overfeeding
- Food intolerance
- Chemicals
- Excess protein & fat



**Upset digestion**

## How can diet help?

Dogs that are prone to digestive issues need natural, wholesome foods, high in complex carbohydrates (especially wholegrains such as brown rice), low in protein and fat and free from additives (other than essential vitamins and minerals).

All of these help to aid digestion and avoid the build-up of toxic waste in the system. High digestibility means that feeding amounts are lower and only a small amount of material reaches the lower bowel with the bonus that stool volume is much reduced.

Feeding a hypoallergenic, high quality natural diet will also help avoid provoking digestive upset relating to an allergy or intolerance.

A hypoallergenic diet will usually contain a single protein source and should not contain common causing food allergy ingredients such as dairy or wheat gluten.

If a dog has a very sensitive digestive system a diet containing novel ingredients may be beneficial. A novel ingredient refers to an ingredient that they have unlikely been exposed to previously such as Duck, Pork, Fish or Maize therefore an immune reaction is unlikely.



### Which food should I give?

I find that many pet owners stumble from brand to brand in the hope of coming across a food which will help their dog. For more difficult cases the **Burns Health and Nutrition Team** has the knowledge and experience to advise you on how a methodical process can help. For example, one dog may not be suited to chicken but could do well on duck, for another, a potato or maize-based food may be more effective than a rice-based one.



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 <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does it have controlled levels of protein and fat? .....	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are the ingredients high quality? .....	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the food contain chemical additives or preservatives? ...	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the diet complete? .....	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the diet hypoallergenic? .....	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is the diet balanced? .....	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the diet have an identifiable protein source? .....	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are the ingredients natural? .....	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are any of the ingredients artificial? .....	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Top tip!

If your dog is in the middle of an episode of upset digestion, a short period (12 - 24 hours) without any food will usually allow things to settle down. Following this feeding some home cooked chicken and boiled rice usually helps to get them back on track before re-introducing their food.

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



Contact us

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THE VETERINARY GUIDE TO UPSET DIGESTION

By John Burns BVMS MRCVS

