



**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

## Behaviour and nutrition...

When I first developed my food, my intention was focused on how physical health was influenced by nutrition. However, many dog owners also noticed improvements in the behaviour and mental condition of their pets.

Hyperactive dogs became calm, timid dogs became more confident, and unruly dogs were suddenly easier to control and train. These changes were unexpected but they should not be surprising. The very basis of a holistic, natural approach is that body and mind are one, and have an effect on each other.

I recommend foods based on complex carbohydrates, usually from whole grains such as brown rice, oats and maize - the traditional food of humans (and therefore domesticated dogs) for many centuries.

Complex carbohydrates are absorbed more slowly than simple, refined sugars. Foods that are low in fat and protein and free from simple sugars and chemical additives such as colourings are also beneficial. It should also be hypo-allergenic meaning that they are less likely to cause food allergy/intolerance reactions.

These nutritional characteristics promote stable mental and physical health, which are essential when dealing with undesirable behaviour. You can read more about how diet affects health, both mental and physical in my **Veterinary Guide to Natural Healthcare**.

### Behaviour and food allergy/intolerance

Abnormal behaviour has frequently been linked to food sensitivity, so a hypoallergenic diet may be helpful.

You can read more about food allergy/intolerance in my **Veterinary Guide to Natural Healthcare** (pp.9 -10)

### Behaviour and additives

There are many studies linking hyperactive and aggressive behaviour in children to chemical additives such as colourings and sugar. Common sense tells us that these should be avoided in dogs too.

### Behaviour and toxic overload

Production of waste is a normal part of the metabolic process but when this is excessive, these wastes accumulate and can interfere with normal physical and mental health.

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

**Poor quality food** – e.g. inappropriate 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).

**“The very basis of a holistic, natural approach is that body and mind are one, and have an effect on each other.”** - John Burns

• **Poor quality food**

• **Chemicals**

• **Overfeeding**

• **Excess fat/protein**

Food intolerance

Toxic overload

Excess energy intake

Behaviour problems

### 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 has individual needs. 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 physical copy.



## Top tips!

**Identify possible causes** – can the behaviour be attributed to environmental, health issues or diet. Control what you can and seek further help if needed. Even the smallest changes can make a big impact.

**Environmental issues** – unfamiliar sounds or objects may cause behavioural issues. Early exposure to a variety of different sounds, sights and smells can help minimise reactive behaviour. Positive reinforcement when they have new experiences will help to make these exposures less frightening in the future. Boredom can also insight behavioural problems such as destructive behaviour so it is worth evaluation their exercise routine in case a small adjustment may be beneficial and feeding toys, puzzles etc offer an additional form of mental exercise.

**Genetics/Health Issues** – identify with the help of a professional if needed. Behavioural issues may be related to conditions such as arthritis, various diseases and age-related issues such as loss of vision. Genetics may play a role as, if dogs that have a poor temperament are bred then this may put an additional factor playing a part in your dogs behaviour.

**Don't forget** - pets can be irritable and aggressive if they are in chronic pain. This may be especially true for older dogs. If this is happening with your dog, we recommend a check up with your own vet to rule out any other conditions.



## Common Behaviour Problems

Hyperactivity

Destructive behaviour

Aggression

Barking



## 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.

John and the Nutrition Team



Right advice

Right food

Right amount

Healthy dog,  
Happy owner

Freephone **0800 083 66 96**  
Ireland (freephone) **1800 836696**  
Email **info@burnspet.co.uk**

Sales Advice  
Product Advice  
Nutrition Advice  
**Live Chat**

Online  
now

[www.burnspet.co.uk](http://www.burnspet.co.uk)



**NATURAL  
FOOD FOR PETS**  
DOG | CAT | RABBIT

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

**Head Office:** Burns Pet Nutrition Ltd, Ferry Road,  
Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire, SA17 5EJ • Tel: 01554 890482

**Scotland Office:** Unit 9, Moorfield North Industrial Park,  
Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, KA2 0FE • 01563 571959

**Republic of Ireland:** 1800 836696

# THE VETERINARY GUIDE TO BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS

By **John Burns** BVMS MRCVS

