



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 is tear staining?

Tear staining is usually seen in small and toy breeds with light coloured coats, such as the Bichon Frise or Westie.

These dogs often have runny eyes where the tears stain the hair on the face a pinkish-brown colour. The staining is commonly thought to be caused by blocked tear ducts but I have found that tear staining can be corrected by proper feeding.

What causes tear staining?

Build-up of toxic waste in the system, in my opinion, is the major cause of tear staining.

Production and elimination of waste products (toxins) is part of normal metabolism. However, if waste production is excessive, these wastes accumulate in the system and interfere with normal, healthy function.

There are several potential causes of this excess waste production:

- **Poor quality food** – 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!

It is important to feed a **natural, wholesome foods**, based on complex carbohydrates, low in fat and protein and free from additives (other than essential vitamins and minerals).

Fed sparingly, this can avoid the build-up of toxic waste in the system which causes tear staining.

Food allergy or intolerance may also be a cause due to an increase in inflammation so feeding a hypoallergenic diet is important. You can read more about food allergy/intolerance in my **Veterinary Guide to Natural Healthcare** (pp.9 -10).

Which food is best for my dog?

I find many 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 & Nutrition Team** has the knowledge and experience to advise you on how a methodical process can help find the right food for your dog. For example, one dog may not be suited to chicken but may do well on duck. For another, a potato or maize based food may be more effective than a rice-based one.

“Tear staining is usually seen in small and toy breeds with light coloured coats, such as the Bichon Frise or Westie.” - John Burns

What can cause dogs to have tear staining?

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

Toxic waste
build-up

Tear
staining



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) or request a paper copy.



Can I still feed treats?

If your dog suffers from a problem such as tear staining, it is best to avoid feeding treats until the problem is resolved.

During the elimination process it's important to stick to a straightforward diet that you can monitor, so avoid treats and table scraps (vegetables are OK). We understand this is tricky but it may only be a temporary measure while the issue is resolved.

Top tip!

Ask your vet to check your dog's anal glands, even if there is no sign of a problem. This is a fast-track way of removing waste from the body which could be contributing to the tear staining.

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!

Remember when considering diet and its role in your dogs tear staining issue this consideration should include any treats, chews or table scraps that they may also have on a daily or weekly basis as even a small amount may just be enough to tip the balance and add to the toxic waste in their body.

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 or request a paper copy



Contact us

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THE VETERINARY GUIDE TO
TEAR STAINING

By John Burns BVMS MRCVS

