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POPULAR ARTICLE

Prevention Starts at Home: Feeding and Hygiene Tips for Pet Parents

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Introduction:

In today's fast-paced and often stressful world, pets become more than just animals; they are beloved companions, emotional anchors, and cherished members of the family. Whether it is the joyful wag of a dog's tail or affectionate conversation for us, the presence of a pet can bring warmth, structure, and a deep sense of connection to our daily lives.

As roles of pet parents evolve, responsibility of ensuring their well-being is also grows simultaneously. Proper nutrition, consistent care, and emotional attention are essential to their health and happiness. This guide offers practical, day-to-day advice to help pet parents provide the love and care their furry because when we care for them, they care for us. Thus, feeding, body care and dental hygiene recommendations are presented here for optimum care of pets.

Feeding Recommendations:

Feeding is much crucial component of pet care and it should be performed very carefully. Various feed items are available in market and every advertised thing is not healthy for our lovely creature. In addition, whatever we are taking as feed is not completely suitable for pet as their digestive physiology and nutritive requirements are entirely different from human beings.

- Readymade commercial diet is recommended for early/growing age of dog (up to 9-12 months) for complete nutritional demand, and then it may be shifted on conventional feed.
- Small bone peace should be avoided in meat as puppy/greedy dogs shows indiscriminate feeding and small pieces may choke them.
- Spines/barbs of fishes should be avoided as it may injure dog's oral cavity and digestive tract.
- In case of readymade feed, no added salt is required, however small quantity (half pinch) salt is

required if dog is on conventional homemade diet.

- Never attempt abrupt change in dog diet, any modulation is suggested in gradual manner.

Henceforth, detailed suggestions are discussed here for adoption of better feeding practices.

S. No.	Recommended Feed	Not Recommended Feed
1	Dalia, Khichadi and Daal (Mixed)	Spices, onion, garlic, fried feed, gravy/curry
2	Vegetables (Loki, Kaddu, Kheera, beans, gazar, peas, sweet potato and broccoli)	Green or red chilli, tomato, spinach, wild mashroom, cabbage,
3	Fruits (pears, berries, pineapple, kiwi, banana, apple)	Sugar, market sweets, cold drinks, alcohol drink, energy drink and ice-cream
4	Roti, Rice, bread, pasta, oatmeal	Dry fruits (almond, walnut)
5	Milk, curd, butter milk (once in day only), coconut water, plain popcorn,	Chocolate, cheese, butter, yoghurt, corn cob, popcorn kernels,
6	Paneer, Soyabean, tofu	Resin fruits (grapes, kismis, jamun), avocado, lemon, lime and candy
7	Egg, chicken, meat, fish; boiled only	Non boiled egg, raw meat items and raw fish
8	Vegetable soup, Chicken soup	human biscuits (Parle-G etc)
10	Readymade feed (trusted brands may pre preferred after assessment.)	

Body Care and Bathing:

Daily body care cleaning is essential for dermal health and shining coat of furry. However daily bathing in enthusiasm must be avoided as it is not required for pet. Thus, here detail instructions are provided for daily care and bathing schedule based on different age group of pets.

S. No.	Age	Bath guidelines
1	Up to 3 months	Completely avoid bathing, prefer grooming or plain water cleaning or wipes (if necessary)
2	3-6 months	Complete and regular grooming and use plain water bath or mild non medicated dog shampoo
3	6 month and above	Mild non medicated branded dog shampoo eg. Virbac Episooth, Intas Procot, Himalaya Erina etc.
4	Summer days	7-10 days interval
5	Winter days	15-20 days interval

- Use medicated shampoo only in direction of Veterinary Physician.
- Never use human shampoo for dogs as it causes more harm to skin cells due to pH variations.

- Never use any human skin product (ointment, cleanser, antiseptic) for dogs as these are having different ingredients and pH level, which is not suitable for dog skin.
- If dog shampoo is not available due to any reason simple water with neem leaves can be used.
- Daily two times (15 min each) grooming with comb and brush is necessary to keep pet's body coat healthy, shiny and free from external parasites.
- Pet wipes may be used in case of undesired dirty sticks instead of frequent bath.

Dental Hygiene:

Cleaning of dog teeth is imperative to prevent different oral and gastrointestinal diseases. Therefore, regularly clean the teeth after last feed of the day is suggested. Use any soft brush/cotton cloth and finger with clean lukewarm water to remove feed particles from teeth. Regular cleaning will prevent deposition of dental plaque and tarter. Never use human toothpaste for dogs as it contains fluoride and might be toxic or lethal for dogs. It is better to use dog toothpaste or simple lukewarm water for teeth cleaning.

Long bone piece may be given with meat for self-cleaning of teeth (once/twice in a week) or readymade chewing sticks may also be preferred for the same.

Conclusion:

Emphasizing daily pet care plays a crucial role in preventing the need for costly treatments and therapeutic interventions. As the saying goes, prevention is better than cure. Therefore, anyone choosing to keep a pet must recognize that they are taking on a full-time responsibility. Providing optimal care; particularly in the areas of feeding, grooming, and dental hygiene; is essential to prevent them from common ailments viz., digestive upsets, dermatological issues, and dental diseases. These simple daily practices not only ensure the well-being of our pets but also honor the love and loyalty they bring into our lives as some of the most devoted companions on earth.