

# BFCA *Health Times*

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## IN THIS ISSUE

WINTER 2014

2014 Bichon Frise Champions for Health Calendars still available  
Providing A Healthy Diet For Your Bichon Frise by Vickie Halstead  
CHIC and 5 Star Award reports by Paula Hendricks

## **2014 BICHON FRISE CALENDAR**

### **Bichon Frise Champions for Health**

The BFCA Health Committee is proud to feature Bichons with big wins and healthy credentials in this beautifully photographed monthly calendar covering January through December 2014.

To purchase go to <http://www.bichonhealth.org/DonateShop.htm>



Net proceeds of sales are donated to BFCA' s general fund, the BFCA Health Fund and the BFCA Rescue Trust.

**NOTE:** As you read this article, keep in mind that the intent is to educate Bichon owners with less experience than BFCA members, but you may learn something new! This article will soon be posted on the BFCA Health Committee web site [www.bichonhealth.org](http://www.bichonhealth.org) as an update of the original article posted in 2007. Consider sharing this article with your puppy buyers and any Bichon owners you know that need or request diet advice. Vickie

## **Providing A Healthy Diet For Your Bichon Frise**

### **Vickie Halstead RN, CVNS, CLNC**

Armed with the knowledge that the number one health problem for Bichons is skin problems/allergies, Bichon owners are obligated to provide an optimal diet that will promote healthy skin and body and prevent allergies. The skin is the largest organ of the body, the primary defense against the environment. Plus the skin is the first organ to exhibit signs of shock, poor nutrition, changes due to some diseases, and the accumulation of toxins or contaminants in the body. The allergic response in dogs manifests primarily in the skin as opposed to humans who exhibit it in the respiratory tract. A healthy, well-nourished dog will have a thick, shiny coat growing from healthy skin. In other words, the skin and coat are the window to the inner health of a dog.

We humans hear “you are what you eat”, a true statement applicable to dogs as well. A nutritious diet with varying proteins arms your dog’s immune system to fight the allergic response, infections and diseases. Feeding a wide variety of ingredients helps prevent allergies from the repeated exposure to the offending ingredient over time.

As dog owners we have 4 choices for diets, plus combinations: (1) processed dry kibble and/or canned foods, (2) freeze-dried foods that can be rehydrated, (3) raw foods and bones, or (4) cooked meals that are made at home or purchased. Many pet owners feed their dogs only dry kibble, which is convenient. However, this type of diet places a metabolic stress on a dog leading to depression of the immune system, reduced wound healing, allergies, skin problems, hormone imbalances, stress on many organs, and decreased muscle mass. Because dry kibble is so highly processed and dehydrated, dogs must drink large amounts of water, which also places stress on the organs. Plus, the processing of the dry kibble can destroy some nutritional value so the ingredients are not guaranteed, i.e. you truly do not know what you are feeding your dog.

The optimal diet contains food that is whole, human-grade, cooked or raw, and unprocessed. This type of food is easier to digest and contains 70% moisture. Although cooking for your dog is time consuming, it is less expensive than purchased food and provides you with the knowledge of the exact ingredients. The home-cooked diet should include a variety of meat (beef, poultry, fish, pork), dairy products, fruits, vegetables and potatoes. Recipes can be obtained from the Internet. Some healthy choices for treats include frozen blueberries, chunks of raw vegetables or fruit, and bites of cooked liver. Freeze-dried foods are also a healthy choice, especially for traveling. Once rehydrated, they provide sufficient moisture.

High protein in the diet of a healthy dog is safe if it is highly digestible, such as raw or cooked foods, and will not harm the liver or kidneys. As a dog ages, it requires more protein so beware that dry kibble for aging dogs may be lower in protein.

If you choose to feed your Bichon processed dry kibble, the optimal is to select a food that is grain-free. Grains are not digested well in dogs. The risks are digestive problems, allergies, systemic yeast infections, plus too many carbohydrates in foods can lead to diabetes.

The pet food industry provides a multitude of choices, so reading the label allows you to advocate for your dog. Keep in mind that animals used in some poor quality foods may have been relegated unfit for human consumption.

**Avoid** these ingredients in processed kibble, canned food, freeze-dried food, **and treats** (READ THE LABEL!):

1. Artificial preservatives and additives that are poisons and can cause cancer, skin problems, allergies, and other illnesses: ethoxyquin (a pesticide), BHA or BHT, food colorings, propylene glycol (similar to antifreeze)
2. Complex carbohydrates, which the dog cannot fully break down (comes out in the stool): soy flour, soybean meal, corn gluten meal, wheat gluten, and wheat middling
3. Poor quality animal protein that comes from multiple animal sources: poultry meal, animal meal
  - The first 3 ingredients should include 2 single-source whole meats such as chicken and chicken meal (instead of poultry meal, which does not identify the specific animal)
  - The first ingredient should be an actual meat (for example “chicken”), not chicken meal
  - Organic ingredients are preferred
  - \* Soy is not a high quality protein
4. Meat by-products or poultry by-products that include organs, skin, feet, hooves, heads, udders, intestines, feathers
5. Corn (a cheap filler used by some food companies) that can cause allergies or digestive problems
6. Sweeteners that can lead to diabetes
7. Beet pulp or tomato pomace that may cause tear staining
8. Vitamin K3 that is very toxic, AKA: menadione, dimethyltrimidinol sulfate, or “source of vitamin K activity”
9. Grains (rice, wheat) that can cause allergies, diabetes (from excessive carbs), digestive problems, and systemic yeast infections
10. Ingredients that are not human-grade
11. Foods manufactured outside of the US or Canada

Here is an example of the ingredients on the label of a high quality dry kibble that includes chicken and fish and is grain-free:

Fresh boneless chicken, chicken meal, fresh boneless salmon, turkey meal, herring meal, russet potato, peas, sweet potato, fresh boneless turkey, fresh whole eggs, fresh chicken liver, fresh boneless lake whitefish, fresh boneless walleye, sun-cured alfalfa, pea fiber, chicken fat (preserved with mixed tocopherols), organic kelp, pumpkin, chicory root, carrots, spinach, turnip greens, apples, cranberries, blueberries, licorice root, angelica root, fenugreek, marigold flowers, sweet fennel, peppermint leaf, chamomile, dandelion, summer savory, rosemary, vitamin A, vitamin D3, vitamin E, niacin, thiamine mononitrate, riboflavin, d-calcium pantothenate, pyridoxine, folic acid, biotin, vitamin B12, zinc proteinate, iron proteinate, manganese proteinate, copper proteinate, selenium yeast, Lactobacillus acidophilus, Enterococcus faecium

Once you decide on a diet for your Bichon, you need to consider the quantity of food. Depending on the type of diet, adult Bichons do well eating ½ to 1 cup of food per day, divided into 2 meals or fed at one meal. Feeding times and quantity depend on you and your dog’s lifestyle and your dog’s size. If your dog is overweight feed less food with more vegetables, increase activity level, and avoid free feeding which can cause overeating and irregular bowel habits. If your dog is too thin, add some olive oil to the meals and/or increase the quantity. To determine if your Bichon is overweight, use the tips of your fingers to rub across the lateral ribs. Normally you should be able to feel the ribs with slight padding. If the ribs are prominent with no padding the dog may be too thin. If you cannot feel the ribs due to excess padding the dog is overweight.

Puppies require feedings 3 times per day until 6 months, 2 times per day until 1 year, and then 1-

2 times per day. Feeding a puppy formula is not necessary because a puppy will eat almost as much food as an adult, thereby ingesting adequate protein. If you chose to feed a puppy formula kibble, change to adult food at 6 months, the age when the majority of growth is completed.

Processed canine diets do not supply adequate nutrition; so dietary supplements are needed to maintain your Bichon's health and to prevent skin problems and allergies. Consider giving supplements even if your Bichon is on a cooked, freeze-dried or raw diet.

Supplement recommendations from the research I've done and my experience:

1. High quality daily multiple vitamin: Wysong's AddLife, Solid Gold vitamins, Missing Link, Nupro with joint support, or Wholistic Canine Complete
2. Always have fresh, hard water available (not softened water--contains salt). Distilled bottled water or reverse-osmosis filtered water is best to prevent tear staining and bladder stones.
3. Probiotics to maintain the healthy flora in the gut, which promotes the immune system and aids digestion. Contained in Wysong, Nupro, and Wholistic Complete supplements mentioned above or add a tablespoon of yogurt with cultures to a meal.
4. Fish Oil dosage: For healthy dogs—10-15 mg of each (EPA and DHA) per pound; For unhealthy dogs—up to 30 mg of each (EPA and DHA) per pound. Also available in canned fish that you can feed your dog, such as Jack Mackerel and sardines.

Benefits of fish oil:

- Improves coat and skin condition
- Helps regulate the immune system
- Reduces inflammation
- Aids mental development of puppies before and after birth
- Improves cognition in older dogs
- Supports dogs with cancer and diseases of the heart and kidneys

Once you have chosen a healthy diet for your Bichon, you need to know how to encourage good eating habits. BFCA health committee receives many reports of Bichon owners who need advice on finicky eaters. The dogs learn from the owners that if they refuse to eat a meal, an optional meal will be provided. Dogs in the wild did not eat daily. So, if your dog refuses a meal, wait until the next day when the dog is very hungry. Allow a limited time to eat the meal before removing it. Dogs will learn to eat what is provided. I find that my dogs eat well each day with one meal in the evening and treats in the morning such as frozen blueberries, yogurt, or meat.

To dispel a myth, dogs can eat table food but not at the table which encourages begging, plus only give healthy food. For example, when chopping vegetables give your dog a few bites as a treat. If you are eating a banana, consider sharing a morsel with your dog! If I have healthy leftovers in the fridge that I don't plan to eat, I add the food to their evening meal. My Bichons get excited for their evening meal and enjoy the variety, plus they have normal formed stools. If you change your dog from one dry kibble to another dry kibble or to a different diet, do it gradually to avoid loose stools. If you are feeding a dry kibble, mix it up by alternating with another dry kibble that contains a different protein source.

Feeding your dog in the crate/kennel has several advantages:

2. It allows you to assess how well your dog is eating and to control the portions. A decrease in appetite can be an early sign of illness.
3. If you have other pets in the house it keeps them out of your dog's food.
4. It prevents children from pestering the dog during meals.
5. It helps dogs get accustomed to the crate so it becomes a pleasant place.
6. It seems to encourage dogs to eat what is offered.
7. If this is done during human meal times, it discourages the dog from begging at the table.

## **Selected References:**

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The Truth About Pet Products, by R. L. Wysong, DVM. Inquiry Press, 2002.

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How to Have a Healthier Dog, by Wendell O. Belfield, DVM. Library of Congress, 1981.

Whole Dog Journal

FDA pet food recalls: [www.fda.gov/animal/Veterinary/safetyhealth/recallswithdrawals/default.htm](http://www.fda.gov/animal/Veterinary/safetyhealth/recallswithdrawals/default.htm)

January 15, 2014

## **CHIC REPORT 4th QUARTER 2013**

### **SUMMARY OF TOTAL CHIC NUMBERS AND UPDATES FOR BFCA TO DATE**

ORIGINAL QUALIFIERS	382	July 2007
TOTAL NEW QUALIFIERS	813	Dec. 2013
ORIGINAL UPDATES	52	July 2007
TOTAL UPDATES	354	Oct. 2013

## **CHIC 5 STAR AWARDS**

The CHIC 5 Star Award is issued to any Bichon owned by a BFCA member with a CHIC number, that has passed the CHIC tests, and that additionally has obtained any two of the following (see <http://www.bichonhealth.org/CHIC.htm> for more information and applications):

1. Cardiac OFA certification by cardiologist or practitioner
2. Legg-Calve-Perthes OFA Certification
3. DNA registered with AKC

Urinalysis that tests for diabetes, bladder infection, crystals

4. Bile acid blood test to rule out liver shunt
5. Standard veterinary blood panel including:
  - CBC (complete blood count): WBC, RBC, hemoglobin
  - Electrolytes, BUN, Creatinine (to assess kidney function)
  - Blood glucose level (to rule out diabetes)
  - Liver enzymes (to rule out liver disease)
  - Pancreas enzymes (to rule out pancreas disease)

## CHIC 5 Star Awards In 2013

Craigdale Chip Off The Rock	Cheryl Blair & Patricia Dale Hunter	2/28/13
Luvit's Dalnavert Olympic Omegamania	Jill SanFilippo, Linda Ross, Bernice & Brian Lucas, Marilyn Torrance	3/11/13
Doriann's Saks Hollywood Bombshell	Michelle and Carol Konick	10/29/13
Doriann's Tennessee Gentleman Jack	Michelle and Carol Konick	10/29/13
Knollwood's Henry	Susan Anneser & Dean Anneser	3/11/13
Miabella Dancing Queen	Sheryl Kapella	6/3/13
Miabella Head Over Heels	Sheryl Kapella	6/3/13
Hollyhock She Returns	Debra Gibb, Linda Rowe, Diana McFarlane, Sharon Hunkins	6/18/13
Bibelot's Witchful Thinking	Paula Hendricks, Janet Jamison	5/13/13
Doriann's The Duke of Prelude	Michelle and Carol Knoick	10/29/13

## Total CHIC 5 Star Awards 2010-2013

The BFCA Health Committee has issued CHIC 5 Star Awards to the following Bichons since its inception in 2010. This ongoing list will be posted in each issue of The Health Times:

Allure's U Chenoa Joe	Lisa Des Camps*, Katherine Dillon*
Bella Diamella Sunday Surprize Camps*	Stephanie Uva*, Katherine Dillon*, Lisa Des
Bibelot's Destiny Awaits	Paula Hendricks*, Gina Pantely
Bibelot's Purple Heart O'Mine	Matt & Paula Abbott*
Bibelot's Sugar Plum Dancer	Matt & Paula Abbott*
Bibelot's Witchful Thinking	Paula Hendricks*, Janet Jamison*
Bijone's Mon Cheri Music of the Nite	Susan Brockett*, Barbara Shaffer, Nicole Shaffer
Craigdale Chip Off The Rock	Chery Blair*, Patricia Dale Hunter*
Crème's Brandy Alexanderia	Carol Haines*
Crème's Fool's Rush In	Carol Haines*
Doriann's Saks Hollywood Bombshell	Michelle and Carol Konick*
Doriann's Tennessee Gentleman Jack	Michelle and Carol Konick*
Doriann's The Duke of Prelude	Michelle and Carol Konick*
Hollyhock She Returns	Debra Gibb*, Linda Rowe*, Diana McFarlane*, Sharon Hunkins*
Jabree's BellefleurLa Jolie	Nita & Mark Gryan*
Jabree's Jack of Hearts	Nita & Mark Gryan*
Jasme Raggedy Ann	Mayno Blanding*
Knollwood's Henry	Susan & Dean Anneser*
Luvit's A Rolex Yacht-Master At Dalnavert	Linda Ross*, Bernice & Brian Lucas*
Luvit's A rolex Daytona At Dalnavert	Linda Ross*, Bernice & Brian Lucas*

Luvit's Dalnavert Olympic Omegamania  
Lucas\*,  
Hunkins\*  
Merryell Absolutely Spellbound  
Merrymaker's Living Doll  
Merrymaker's Southern Charm of Bibelot  
Miabella Dancing Queen  
Miabella Head Over Heels  
MyBliss Dandy Devil Wears White  
MyBliss Expertly Engineered  
MyBliss Galaway's Irish Imp  
MyBliss Petite Coquette  
MyBliss Sport Edition At Bella  
Paray Parasol of Knollwood  
Paray's Secret Encounter  
Saks Hamelot Little Drummer Boy  
Saks Winning Card  
Victoire Cheers to Austin  
Victoire Diamond Rio Citrine  
Victoire Gerie No Lemon Gemstone  
Victoire Juniper's Hot Tamale  
Victoire L'Amour Champagne Lace  
Victoire Melodie's Bleu Reign  
Victoire Phantom's Devil in Disguise  
Victorie's Norwegian Red  
White Shadow Galaway Hide N'Seek

Jill SanFilippo, Linda Ross\*, Bernice & Brian  
Diana McFarlane\*, Sharon

Mayno Blanding\*  
Cindy Morey\*  
Cindy Morey\*  
Sheryl Kapella\*  
Sheryl Kapella\*  
Myra Wotton\*, Jan & Alan Shetzer\*  
Myra Wotton\*  
Nancy Noonan\*  
Loretta McDonald\*  
Stephanie Uva\*, Myra Wotton\*  
Susan & Dean Anneser  
Susan & Dean Anneser  
Sandra & Kieth Hanson\*  
Sandra & Kieth Hanson\*  
Vickie Halstead\*  
David & Darlene Scheiris, Vickie Halstead\*  
Vickie Halstead\*, Mary Wangsness  
Vickie Halstead\*, Louise Davidson  
Jan Strom, Vickie Halstead\*  
Melody Michel\*, Vickie Halstead\*  
Diana Bugos, Vickie Halstead\*  
Vickie Halstead\*  
Nancy Noonan\*

\* Denotes BFCA members