

## Vet Dental Promo – Pet Owners Beware

Throughout August the [Australian Veterinary Association \(AVA\) together with Hill's pet-food makers](#) will be encouraging pet owners [‘to come in for a free or discounted dental check’](#).

‘It’s an outrage’, say anti-junk pet-food campaigners Drs Breck Muir and Tom Lonsdale.

**In 1991 — yes 23 years ago — [we blew the whistle on the mass suffering and cruelty](#) arising from the unholy alliance between vets and junk pet-food makers.**

Pets fed junk food (canned, dry and minced concoctions) are denied the essential tooth scrubbing and flossing provided by raw meaty bones. The result: most pets suffer stinking breath and inflamed gums.

Inflamed gums leads to heart, liver and kidney problems and shortened life. ([The AVA admits this.](#))

Alas the AVA discourages feeding raw meaty bones. Instead they promote tooth brushing for dogs and cats! (Try that twice a day without getting bitten and scratched.)

‘It’s a perfect commercial circle’, says Dr Muir. ‘Many vets push junk food that makes pet sick. They then push doggy toothbrushes and cosmetic scale and polish under anaesthetic.’ ‘Oh, and pick up a prescription bag of food on the way out’ the junk-food pushers say.

[Sydney Morning Herald journalist Elizabeth Farrelly complained](#) about vets’ fees and the ‘exorbitant science-nosh’. Her cats were getting sicker and sicker as she followed her vet’s loaded advice.

**Before remortgaging the house, I did what you do. Googled, found a website called [Raw Meaty Bones](#). The message was obvious and compelling. I decided to try it. For a month, I gave them each a daily, raw chicken wing. Period. Pretty soon both cats were bouncing. No trouble peeing. No bad-breath or sore inflamed gums. Their coats became thicker and glossier. Two happy cats.**

In 2004 [NSW Labour MP Paul Lynch criticised the AVA in Parliament](#), “The AVA has financial ties to pet food companies. For 10 years the AVA has sought to stifle news of the scandal” . . . It is a disgrace.’

‘Vulnerable pets and their owners need a full parliamentary inquiry with prosecutions for false and misleading advertising, cruelty and deception’ say Drs Muir and Lonsdale.

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## Excerpt from Elizabeth Farrelly article published July 11, 2013

My own cats, it may not surprise you to learn, are both card-carrying eccentrics.

Jack Pussy, a big-hair mog, loves to drink bathwater - but only warm, and only occupied. He's fine with unguents and even rosewater but declines the more synthetic perfumes. Diesel, an otteresque Burmese, loves raisins - Thompson's organic, no oil - taking them daintily one by one with his tiny front teeth. He also likes rice crackers, especially the dried seaweed variety, and being suspended by his four paws. This makes him purr.

Diesel and Jack are mutually devoted. They share milk, reciprocate grooming and playfight without rancour. They sleep curled together in one round bed like yin and yang. They crave human affection. Diesel touches your face gently with one paw to make eye contact, and repeatedly to keep it.

They are, in short, sweet. Yet cats are carnivores, and carnivores hunt. Even Jack and Diesel hunt. Twigs. Leaves. Cockroaches (crunchy!). Bogongs. Baby rats. Inadvertent mynahs (rare) and, despite long-term lizard-aversion therapy, the occasional drop tail skink.

Frankly? Half a can of jellified ex-meat spooned out with the evening news doesn't cut it in the thrill department.

There's also this. That can of Purrfect Pussy is like putting your kids on a Maccas three times a day.

Jack, age four or five, was diagnosed with feline urinary tract disease. He had trouble peeing and needed a scientifically formulated biscuit diet, \$66 a bag. To feed him anything else, the vet said, risked hospitalisation and death.

It got worse. A couple of years later, Diesel developed dreadful smelly breath. He grew listless and refused food. The vet diagnosed feline stomatitis. Said he needed antibiotics, possible dental surgery and regular tooth cleaning.

I'm sorry, what? Me, twice a day with a cat toothbrush? There had to be a better way.

Meanwhile Jack, on his exorbitant science-nosh, was permanently ravenous. He lost weight and, under the big fur, became bird-light. He was anxious, and started escaping over the back fence at night, hunting. At least once a week I'd find a baby rat, or a tail, or just a blood-smear, on the bathroom floor.

Before remortgaging the house, I did what you do. Googled, found a website called Raw Meaty Bones. The message was obvious and compelling. I decided to try it. For a month, I gave them each a daily, raw chicken wing. Period. Pretty soon both cats were bouncing. No trouble peeing. No bad-breath or sore inflamed gums. Their coats became thicker and glossier. Two happy cats.

Slowly I added beef bones. Fish scraps. Milk (lactose free). Bathwater. Rice crackers. More love, more purring happiness.

That was a few years ago. The cats - now 10 and 12 respectively - have never looked better. Yes, I feel bad for the chickens, but as I write, Diesel lies beside me, snuggled in, supine, nibbling raisins, purring deeply, feet flopped in the air. Weird, but happy.

But cat cuisine turns out to be intensely controversial. The blogosphere, unending spring of sincere misinformation, bristles with advice. Some is eminently ignorable, like the railing against "raw fish, chicken or eggs" and "bones of any kind".

More difficult is when verified truths contradict my experience. Grape and raisin toxicity, for example, is a recognised cause of acute renal failure in dogs and possibly cats. Yet mine like them. Chocolate is meant to kill dogs, yet our overbred poodle puppy, with stomach issues of his own, once ate an entire dark-chocolate yacht, weighing at least a kilogram, and was fine.

The problem becomes epistemological. Who to trust? Science? Nature? Experience?

When science fails (or worse, seems captive) we default to nature. The scientific cat diet, emerging as less a treatment than a subtle vet loyalty program, made nature's raw meaty bones a plausible alternative.

But take nature to its conclusion and it is clear cats should gorge irregularly, as in the wild, and should hunt. It's what their teeth, physiology and instincts imply.

Read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/comment/within-a-whisker-of-being-stigmatised-20130710-2pqc1.html#ixzz2Yt0o5rRM>

## NSW Parliament Hansard 13 May 2004

**Subjects** Veterinarians; Animals: Dogs; Animals: Cats; Food  
**Speakers** Lynch Mr Paul  
**Business** Adjournment

MR TOM LONSDALE AND THE AUSTRALIAN VETERINARY ASSOCIATION  
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Mr LYNCH (Liverpool) [5.39 p.m.]: Tonight I inform the House of the plight of veterinarian Tom Lonsdale. Several of my constituents are interested in the case of Tom Lonsdale, which raises issues of relevance to my electorate, as it does for the electorates of all honourable members. Simply put, Tom Lonsdale complained to the Board of Veterinary Surgeons [BVS]—a State body. Somehow that complaint was made known to the Australian Veterinary Association [AVA]. As a result, after some inadequate processes, he was expelled from the AVA. This is relevant to the House in two broad ways. The first is the behaviour of the BVS, a State body, and the second is the behaviour of the AVA which, while technically being a non-government body, is treated by the Government in a particular way—that is, it is regarded by the Government as representative of veterinarians generally—and representatives of the AVA are placed on various boards by the Government.

It is fair to say that Tom Lonsdale is a controversial figure within veterinarian circles. He has regularly run in elections for the AVA, getting about 10 per cent of the vote fairly consistently. No-one can argue that he has majority support among veterinarians but a consistent vote of 10 per cent suggests significant minority support. His most controversial position stems from asserting the need for dogs and cats to be fed more than canned and dry pet foods: they need to be fed bones. The lengthiest exposition of his argument is in his book, published in 2001 and appropriately entitled *Raw Meaty Bones*. The preface to the book contains the following comments:

If you own a dog or a cat which you feed with processed food from the supermarket or corner store, you will probably find this book deeply disturbing ...

The book is about what happens to dogs and cats if their diet is inadequate. These days most pet owners give their animals processed pet food. It may seem a convenient way of feeding but such a diet on its own is likely over time to cause the pets considerable ill health and suffering. And the signs of the ill health may not be obvious to many owners.

But ask yourself the question: Is it likely that a carnivore—a meat eater—whose species evolved on a diet of the whole carcasses of other animals, will benefit from bland processed food with never a bone in sight?

Needless to say, such views have done little to endear him to the very large, seemingly multinational, companies that mass produce pet food. He has also done himself no favours with veterinarians who do not share his views. Vets and any of their associates who are funded by pet food companies would be likely to be pretty hostile towards him. When his book was published in 2001, Tom Lonsdale sought to have it reviewed in a journal called *The Veterinarian*. I have seen the email correspondence this generated. Despite promises or suggestions that the book would be reviewed, an interview with Tom Lonsdale published or a feature article printed, nothing eventuated. After two years of this frustration, Tom Lonsdale sent copies of what he regarded as this highly unsatisfactory email correspondence to a

number of bodies, including the Board of Veterinary Surgeons of New South Wales. He received an email from Maria Linkenbagh, registrar of the board, asking why he had sent it to her. He replied in an email dated 18 July 2003, which he also sent to almost all members of both Houses of the New South Wales Parliament, part of which stated:

Members of the NSW Board of Veterinary Surgeons are likely aware of the allegations of scientific and consumer fraud perpetrated upon an unsuspecting Australian public by an alliance of pet food companies and veterinarians ...

Any right-thinking person knows that the slow poisoning of the nation's pets by junk food manufacturers, aided by veterinarians, is against the interests of pets, pet owners and the wider community ...

The Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) has financial ties to pet food companies. For ten years the AVA has sought to stifle news of the scandal.

There appears to have been no real substantive response from the BVS. In Tom Lonsdale's view there are many connections between the BVS and the AVA. Thus he was not surprised when the AVA took it upon itself to respond to his communication with the BVS. He was, however, somewhat perturbed by the substance of the reply. He received a letter dated 8 January 2004 from Dr Bruce Cartmill, President of the New South Wales division of the AVA. He advised that the AVA had received a complaint that Tom Lonsdale had breached the AVA code of conduct and was bringing the association into disrepute. No complainant was identified so the complaint, from Tom Lonsdale's point of view, was anonymous. The letter from Cartmill made it clear that Lonsdale's email had generated the complaint. The New South Wales division recommended that Tom Lonsdale's membership of the AVA be cancelled—that is, that he be expelled. This recommendation was referred to the AVA board.

Tom Lonsdale requested full particulars of the allegations against him but no further information was provided. He was told that he was not allowed legal representation at the AVA board meeting that would consider his expulsion. He then received a letter saying that his membership had been cancelled as of 2 March. Tom Lonsdale was expelled from the AVA on the basis of an anonymous complaint in relation to which further particulars were not provided at a hearing at which he could not have legal representation. The whistleblower was punished. This is the action of a kangaroo court. It is a disgrace. There are two levels of serious public policy concern: Did the BVS refer the matter, either formally or informally, to the AVA? How can the Minister for Primary Industries continue to place reliance upon a group such as the AVA? The practical implication of Tom Lonsdale's expulsion is to silence dissenting voices. He cannot run in elections and he is prevented from participating in the AVA group discussions. The AVA has decided who can run against it and who cannot.

<http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/Prod/Parlment/HansArt.nsf/6c0d5d791841aef8ca256d1000816e0b/6f81f344826042c8ca256e9d003f8b3b?OpenDocument>

# AVA Propaganda



Australian Veterinary Association



August is the AVA Pet Dental Health Month and this year's theme is What lurks beneath: gum disease in pets often goes unnoticed.

An initiative of the Australian Veterinary Dental Society (AVDS), a special interest group of the AVA, Pet Dental Health Month is the annual celebration of healthy smiles and the well-being of our pets.

Animal lovers can access information here about dental care for dogs and cats, horses and rabbits. It's your one-stop shop for reliable, accurate and helpful advice from veterinary experts in the field.

There are Pet Dental Health Month activities designed especially for vets and vet nurses. Vet practices are also encouraged to promote Pet Dental Health Month through special promotions or distributing a media release to local media highlighting the importance of looking after the teeth of our furry friends.

AVA Pet Dental Health Month is proudly sponsored by Hill's Pet Nutrition.

AVA **Platinum** Supporter



Makers of 'Science Diet'  
and other junk food

✓ - See more at: <http://www.ava.com.au/dental-month#sthash.4ELhcPWA.dpuf>

Unreliable  
Inaccurate  
Unhelpful



AVA Propaganda.

# Pet Dental Health MONTH



An initiative of The Australian Veterinary Association

## Diet induced Dental health for dogs and cats Absurd

Four out of every five dogs and cats over the age of three years have some sort of dental disease which becomes more severe with age. This can be a real problem for pets and owners because it can lead to more serious problems such as illnesses related to the heart, liver and kidney.

You should check your pet's teeth regularly as pets often won't show pain. Even pets with sore gums, an infected mouth or broken teeth will continue to eat so you may not notice they have problems.

Dogs are pack animals and showing weakness is not part of their nature. They need to eat to survive so won't go off their food until the pain is unbearable.

Signs of toothache or an infection in the mouth to look out for in cats and dogs include bad breath, red and inflamed gums and stained teeth. Your pet may also start dropping food when they are eating.

It's important that pets have regular health checks at the vet. Dogs and cats age much more quickly than humans, and it's important to catch problems early if you want to ensure a long and happy life for your companion animal. Checking your pet's teeth will be part of your annual health check.

Annual dental checks are an ideal opportunity for owners to find out if their pet has an existing problem which has gone unnoticed. Dental checks also help ensure bacteria and poisons from dental infections do not spread to the heart, liver and

kidneys through the bloodstream.

Vets also recommend regular tooth brushing. Tooth brushing is safer and more effective than chewing and many dogs and cats can be trained to enjoy having their teeth brushed, especially if started when they're young.

Although bones are a popular treat that you may be using for dental care, they can cause problems such as broken teeth and gut obstructions.



Scavenging

>> As well as an annual health and dental check, there are a few other things you need to do to make sure your cat or dog stays well:

- Feed them a balanced diet
- Make sure they get plenty of exercise
- If you're not around to keep them company, make sure there are lots of things to play with to stop them getting bored
- Give them lots of love and attention.

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