



Main Street Veterinary Services

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The Basics of Bone Broth

Traditional foods such as bone broth have been a dietary staple in many cultures for centuries. The nourishing and healing properties contained in bone broth have been integral in traditional healing for those who were weak and recovering from sickness and injury. The health benefits now recognized from consuming a well-prepared bone broth range from supporting the formation of healthy skin and joints, to building and restoring healthy immune and digestive system function. In many Chinese prescriptions, soup or broth are used with or without additional herbs for supporting many health-related conditions.



Bone broth differs from soups, stock or stews by its prolonged slow cooker process. The bones and water must be cooked for at least 24 hours in a slow cooker until the bones become so brittle and soft that you can crumble them with your fingers. It is the process of slow cooking that leaches all those building blocks out of the bones in a manner that when consumed, allows the body to utilize them.

What are the benefits of bone broth?

Bone broth is an excellent source of minerals, including calcium, phosphorous and magnesium. It contains protein, the amino acids proline and glycine, as well as gelatin, which support a variety of functions including joint, gut and immune health. Gelatin specifically contains the building blocks to repair tissue and gut related injuries.

Bone broth helps the liver in its detoxification process through the formation of bile salts. For both humans and animals bone broth can help stimulate appetite, soothe digestion, support joint health, and provide immune support. Bone broth also supports brain health. For pets, it can be given as preventative care to help with nausea and for recovery support after a wide variety of injuries.

Who can benefit from bone broth?

Animals who suffer from Irritable Bowel Disease, chronic food sensitivities, chronic skin allergies, chronic vomiting or diarrhea, kibble fed dogs, or those who are afflicted with long-standing chronic illness can all benefit from consuming bone broth. Bone broth is a simple and easy way to nourish the body with key ingredients that support healing and regeneration. It can help strengthen and normalize the gut wall so it can regain its integrity and function in a normal way.

We recommend using fresh, pasture raised, high quality, organic ingredients whenever possible. Please discuss with your veterinarian appropriate ways to tailor the broth for your pet's specific needs and/or condition.

Slow Cooker Bone Broth Recipe

Degree of difficulty: Easy

Ingredients:

- 1 whole chicken or turkey carcass with plenty of meat left on it (*you can also use a small whole chicken, or beef or bison bones*)
- 1-2 cups chopped vegetables (*carrots, celery, parsnip, kale, etc.*)
- 2-4 teaspoons apple cider vinegar
- 1-2 raw garlic cloves
- 1-2 cups of extra meat (if using bones without meat)
- Bunch of fresh parsley (optional)
- 1 tablespoon peppercorns wrapped in cheesecloth (optional, see add-ins for more info)
- Filtered water

Method:

Take a whole chicken or turkey carcass with plenty of meat left on it. If your pet is sensitive to poultry, you can use beef or bison bones instead. Place carcass/bones in a slow cooker. Depending on the size of your slow cooker, add 1-2 cups of chopped vegetables and applicable amount of garlic cloves. A combination of carrots, celery, parsnip and kale are good staples to use. Add 2-4 teaspoons of apple cider vinegar (again, depending on slow cooker size). This will help to release the minerals from the bones. Fill slow cooker with enough filtered water to cover all the contents. Cover with lid, set slow cooker temperature to low and begin cooking process.

Cook on low for 6-8 hours and remove excess meat from bones (if applicable). Return bones to broth. At this point, you may wish to break the bones apart to help release more marrow into the broth.

Continue to cook on low for an additional 20-24 hours, stirring occasionally until the bones are soft enough to crumble with your fingers. During the final hour of cooking, fresh parsley can be added to the broth to assist with pulling additional minerals from the bones. Strain broth in either cheesecloth or a strainer-type colander.

At this point, you may choose to cool and store the broth or proceed with including optional add-ins.

Optional Add-ins:

Added protein and vegetables:

After cooking add the 1 or 2 cups of extra meat (if needed) and an optional cup of extra squash and zucchini to the broth.

Therapeutic add-ins:

For IBD you can add one tablespoon of Slippery Elm and/ or Marshmallow Root. If the immune system needs a boost, add Astragalus root (1 tablespoon in a teabag).

One tablespoon of herbs such as Turmeric, Cumin, Oregano, Thyme, and Basil can be added to the broth in special cases that require additional anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant and immune-related support. When adding Turmeric or Curcumin to your bone broth, try to ensure peppercorns are included in your recipe to maximize the digestive absorption of curcumin (the active ingredient in Turmeric).

Other herbs can be added that are more specific for your pet's condition. Always speak to your integrative veterinarian for advice before adding therapeutic herbs to your bone broth.

Simmer for an additional ½ hour, turn off and cool.

If needed, you can puree the broth into a soup. Remember to ensure that all hard and splintering bones have been removed from the broth. If using bone broth for longer than 2 weeks be sure to add a little raw heart to the broth for taurine supplementation. The broth can be kept in a sealed container the fridge for up to 5 days, or frozen to be used later. Bone broth can last in the freezer for up to one year if stored in appropriate containers.

An average guideline of broth to feed is approximately 1/4 cup per 25 pound bodyweight, 2-3 times daily for up to three weeks or longer.

Always speak to your integrative veterinarian for specific details as it relates to your pet.



Recipe adaptations, Image Credits, and Resources:

<http://phoenixrisingvet.com/bone-broth-a-rediscovery-of-the-old/>

<http://www.royaltreatmentveterinarycenter.com/chicago-vet-recent-news/bone-broth-recipe/>

<https://www.standardprocess.com/Blog/Bone-Broth-Trend-or-tradition#.WGqJ4fkrKrw>

<http://nourishingbroth.com/>

<http://teaspoonliving.com/2015/03/slow-cooker-bone-broth/>