

## **PET FOOD QUALITY**

After having spent 9 years in practice, I have realized that, above all, the most common medical problem that I deal with relates to unhealthy bladders.

I would say that every other day at least one of my patients comes to the hospital with a urinary problem resulting from an infection of the bladder. I would think that if one confronted five friends, who own either a cat or a dog that at least one would have a story to tell of such problems in the past.

The most common cause of bladder infection (cystitis) is the presence of stones (uroliths) in the bladder. Bladder stones vary in size from a grain of sand to a large pebble. Their presence in the bladder causes severe inflammation and often obstruction, which can be life threatening.

The most common cause of bladder stone formation is the effect pet foods have on the pH of the urine. PH is a measure of the acidity (low pH) or alkalinity (high pH) of the urine with respect to normal body fluids. Acceptable urine pH is between 6.5 and 7.0. Any higher or lower will eventually result in the formation of bladder stones. The ability of pet foods to control urine pH is a reflection of that food's quality, quality control by the manufacturer and the mineral (ash) composition of the diet. Just because a bag says "low ash" is not good enough.

If you are in doubt about your pet's present diet's ability to control this problem, a urine analysis will help to determine this. Having this checked, as a preventative measure is very worthwhile because having to deal with this problem medically or often surgically can be quite costly. All of my clients, who have been through this problem, will confirm that the extra cost of superior diets is well worth it.

Wishing you and your pets' good health and happiness