



# Natural Help for...



## Pet Nursing

### What is Nursing?

9 weeks of pregnancy has finally come to an end and your pet has just given birth to a beautiful litter of kittens or puppies. Now all that needs to be done is make sure all the babies are nursing and that the **mother remains in good health** during this nutritionally demanding stage.

As the time for delivery draws nearer, milk is already being produced so that it will be ready in time for the new arrivals. This **special type of milk is called colostrums** and it contains essential antibodies from the mom that will help to guard against illness and infection in the early weeks of life.

It is essential that the puppies or kittens each get their fair share of this early milk as it is only available for one to two days. **After about 48 hours, mature milk will be produced** and this is the milk that will take care of all their nutritional needs over the next few weeks.

The nutritional demands of the new litter are high; in fact, they are growing at such a rapid rate at this stage that they usually **double in weight within the first 10 days of life!** That means that the new mom has to eat enough high quality food to support both her own needs, and those of her young.

Many veterinarians will suggest that the mother eat a diet of premium puppy or kitten food as this is high in nutrients and will contain **all things necessary for the healthy growth** of the litter. During nursing, she should be eating between 1-3 times her usual amount of food, and drinking plenty of water as this will help replace lost fluids as well as stimulate milk production.

### What Problems Can Occur During Nursing?

It is important to keep a watchful eye on the new litter and monitor their health and growth rates. In addition, always keep an eye on the mother as nursing problems such as **eclampsia and mastitis** can cause her to become ill. There are a few things that can go wrong during the nursing phase and by knowing what they are you will be better prepared to recognize them early on.

- *Lactation failure* (agalactia) – This serious problem occurs when no milk is produced by the mammary glands. As a result, the litter will not receive any nutrition, will cry incessantly and fail to gain weight. Lactation failure is very serious and if it occurs you will need to bottle-feed the litter with an appropriate formula until the milk comes in, or until the litter can be weaned onto solid foods.

- *Lactation depression* or (dysgalactia) – this is the most common lactation problem and it is one that often has no apparent cause. Lactation depression is

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when the mammary glands are functioning, yet they are unable to produce enough milk to meet the nutritional needs of the litter. It's not always easy to know when lactation depression is occurring, however, if you monitor the litter's weight gains, you should be able to pick up that they are not gaining enough weight. The puppies or kittens may also pull at the teats or cry more than usual and you may also notice that the litter does not nurse for continuous lengths of time, but that they still seem hungry. It is important to treat lactation depression as soon as possible to prevent delays in developmental growth.

- **Deficient milk** – this less common problem occurs when milk is produced in sufficient quantity but lacks some of the nutrients required for the litter's growing needs. This can also be a sign of nutritional problems in the mother.
- **Eclampsia** – In humans, eclampsia is associated with blood pressure, but in cats and dogs it is related to the levels of calcium available in the blood. In eclampsia, the majority of the mother's calcium is lost to the milk so that while litter receives their nutritional needs, the mother is left calcium deficient which can have serious health consequences. The condition is often the result of a very large litter or those with nutritional problems themselves. If not treated Eclampsia can be life threatening.
- **Mastitis** – Mastitis is an inflammation or bacterial infection of the mammary glands. This is a potentially serious problem as the infection can contaminate the milk causing illness in the kittens or puppies. The infection can also spread quickly and the mother can become quite ill if the infection is not treated soon.

## Natural Remedies

There is something so beautiful about watching a litter of puppies or kittens **nursing** on their new mother. **Nursing** is a beautiful and natural process, and when things go wrong with the production of milk, who better to trust than nature to help restore balance safely and effectively. Herbal ingredients such as Milk Thistle and Goat's Rue are excellent at helping to **encourage milk production** and **increase milk flow**.

Milk Thistle also acts as an effective liver tonic and can help **reduce the amount of toxins** passed through the milk to the litter. Another beneficial herb that increases milk production is Fennel and along with being excellent for **nursing problems**, it is also an excellent digestive tonic and blood cleanser.

Lastly, Borage helps to encourage healthy milk production while also containing **soothing, anti-inflammatory ingredients** that help recovery from whelping or queening and act as a tonic remedy for digestive and bowel functioning.

## Tips for lactating and nursing pets

- In every litter there are those puppies or kittens that are just more pushy and dominant than others. Just the same, there are often those who may be weaker and if you don't keep watch, these little ones may get pushed out of the way during feedings. It is especially important to make sure this doesn't happen within the first 48 hours as the entire litter needs to get their full of



### Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist



All of our natural remedies are formulated by our expert team of herbalists, naturopaths and homeopaths, and headed by Michele Carelse.

Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies for both people and pets. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

colostrum!

- The best thing that you can do for your pet and her litter is to provide her with a healthy nutritious diet that meets all her dietary needs as well as those of her babies. Make sure her food and water are close to her nesting area.
- Keep the nesting area clean and replace the newspaper or towel lining regularly.
- Calcium supplements are sometimes recommended for nursing mothers; however, it is important to discuss correct dosages with your vet before hand. Calcium supplements during pregnancy can sometimes cause eclampsia during nursing, so always consult your vet before deciding on any supplements!
- If for some reason the mother is unable to feed her litter, then you will need to take over. Ask your vet for a recommended pet milk formula and get prepared for the sleepless nights ahead. For the first week, puppies and kittens need to be fed every 2hrs, after which you can usually feed between every 3-4 hours. At week 3, you can gradually start weaning the puppies or kittens onto solid food to supplement their bottle feeds. Whenever possible, steps to encourage the mother to feed should be taken.
- While we may think we know best sometimes, cats and dogs naturally have great maternal instincts and tend to be good mothers. Try leaving them to do their thing and only interfere when necessary.
- Monitor the weights and growth of each kitten or puppy so that you can pick up if they are not gaining sufficient weight. This may be a sign of lactation problems which need to be addressed.

## The Natural Approach

While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is not the only treatment option. Conventional western medicine, often called allopathic medicine, is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools and most pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine. Allopathic medicine is also sometimes called orthodox medicine.

Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that, only a few decades ago, homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available – and freely used even by conventional doctors and veterinarians. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is ‘better’ than the other, many responsible doctors and vets (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that both have a role to play in the treatment program.

Just like humans, domesticated animals like dogs and cats are affected by the health hazards of modern living. Pollution, poor nutrition, stress and unhealthy lifestyles can lead to a variety of illnesses and conditions that are very similar to those experienced by humans. In fact, many, if not most pet health concerns can be addressed by helping your pets to live a healthier lifestyle. While it has its place, conventional medicine for animals and 'modern technology' have failed our pets in many ways.

According to pet expert and author CJ Puotinen, most holistic veterinarians and animal health care professions list annual vaccinations and commercial pet foods as the major contributory cause in the rising rates of chronic illness in pets today.

## Ask Our Experts a Product Question

If you have a question about one of our products, its usage or dosage, ask Michele and her team of experts about about it [HERE!](#) We will do our best to get you an answer within 24 hours.

## Great Health Sites

[Natural Pet Health Blog](#)

[Natural Holistic Health Blog](#)

[PetAlive Natural & Herbal Remedies for Pets](#)

[Native Remedies - Natural & Herbal Remedies](#)

[Remedies4...Free Natural Health Ebooks](#)

Similarly, Juliette de Bairacli Levy, respected author and renowned animal breeder, points out that contrary to the belief that mass vaccination and antibiotic use will contribute to a decrease in disease, the opposite has in fact proved true. Like their human counterparts, today's pets are becoming more and more vulnerable to chronic disease and ill health. This has led many veterinarians to search for alternatives and to espouse more holistic methods of keeping our pets healthy.

"In the wild, animals instinctively seek out healing herbs to help them when they are ill or undernourished. In fact, Asclepius, the ancient Greek god of medicine, respected dogs very highly for their ability to seek out and eat medicinal herbs in the wild. This ability is shared by other animals, including cats. We are coming to realize that nature often has the answers - but animals have always known this! Natural medicine can help your pet just as it can help you. While there is always a place for conventional veterinary medicine, natural medicine can compliment conventional veterinary care and in many cases do just as well. I have applied the same care and research that have gone into our Native Remedies range for adults and children to the development of pet-friendly, safe and effective natural remedies for animals. As always, all remedies are formulated to the highest therapeutic standards and manufactured under strict pharmaceutical conditions for your peace of mind and the well being of your pets. " Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist.

"When a veterinary surgeon practices the use of homeopathic medicine and is asked why he does so, he may give one of several answers. The simple answer would be that the results are good, an emphatic answer would be that homeopathic treatment has no unpleasant or dangerous side effects, while still achieving successful results.

The [PetAlive Homeopathic range](#) has been formulated with this knowledge and is specifically designed to treat your pet in a holistic and natural manner."

Dr. Glenn Ferguson  
M-Tech Homeopathy, Doctor of Chinese Medicine

## Related Natural Remedies:

**[LacToll](#)**: Optimize healthy milk production in nursing dogs and cats

LacToll is a **100% safe and natural combination of herbal ingredients** for the support of colostrum and milk production in nursing pets, as well as providing a natural tonic for the nursing female dog or cat.

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5) We offer a free email [Ask Our Experts](#) service run by trained consultants ready to advise you on the best choice for your pet's health.

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