

# An Integrative Approach to Urinary Tract Health in Pets

Developed and reviewed by the members of the Standard Process Veterinary team

## A Focus on Whole Foods and Botanicals

Urinary tract health may be overlooked until the delicate balance is disrupted. Infections, crystals, and stones are prevalent in both dogs and cats and can lead to significant clinical occurrence if not addressed adequately. Current therapies often rely solely on medications and commercial diets to manage these conditions; however, there is a growing body of evidence supporting the incorporation of whole foods and herbs as a complementary approach to urinary tract health. Potential contributors to poor urinary tract health in dogs and cats include suboptimal commercial diets, food sensitivities, stress, hormonal imbalances, endocrine disorders, dysbiosis, compromised immune function, and chronic inflammation.<sup>1,2</sup> Supporting patients with fresh food diets, whole food-based ingredient supplements, and therapeutic herbs can improve clinical outcomes.

## Nutrient Bioavailability and Synergistic Effects

Whole foods are rich in bioactive compounds that the body recognizes, absorbs, and utilizes. Unlike highly processed foods, which may contain artificial additives and preservatives, whole foods provide a complex matrix of nutrients that work synergistically to support physiological functions. Cranberries are well-documented for their role in urinary tract health due to their high levels of proanthocyanidins, which have been shown to inhibit the adhesion of bacteria to the urinary tract lining of dogs.<sup>3</sup> In humans, the use of Marshmallow, (*Althea officinalis*), is traditionally used for kidney and bladder health due to its

mucilage and polysaccharide properties. For that reason, it can be incorporated as adjunctive support in urinary tract irritation and inflammation.<sup>4</sup> The incorporation of such whole foods into the diet can lead to improved urinary health outcomes by providing natural compounds that bolster a healthy immune response and promote urinary tract integrity.

## Nutrients from Food vs Synthetic Nutrients

Reliance on synthetic additives in commercial pet foods has raised concerns regarding their long-term effects on animal health. Whole foods/fresh diets along with whole food-based supplements can offer a natural alternative that can support health while minimizing exposure and potential health risks associated with long-term consumption of synthetic additives found in processed foods.<sup>5</sup> For example, the use of dandelion root has been shown to possess diuretic properties, promoting increased urine flow and aiding in the elimination of toxins.<sup>6</sup> Bovine & ovine kidney are sources of cathepsins which are involved in protein recycling and kidney cell health.<sup>7</sup> Kidney bean extract is rich in phenolic compounds such as flavonoids, saponins, hydroxycinnamic acids, catechins, and anthocyanins, which are dietary antioxidants.<sup>8</sup>

By integrating whole foods, herbs, and whole food-based ingredient supplements, veterinary professionals can help pet owners take a proactive approach to urinary tract health while simultaneously providing essential nutrients that support the organ systems involved in maintaining overall health.

# Adjunctive Supplement Support

## FEATURED PRODUCT



### Canine and Feline Renal Support

Suggested Use: **See product label for dosing by weight**

Formulated to support healthy renal function, urinary tract mucosa, and associated connective tissues.



### Canine and Feline Immune Support

Suggested Use: **See product label for dosing by weight**

Formulated to support healthy functioning of the immune system and provides nutritional and biochemical support for healthy immune cells and tissues.



### VF Omega-3

Suggested Use: **See product label for dosing by weight**

VF Omega-3 is a fish oil supplement for dogs and cats formulated to provide omega-3 fatty acids that support pets' critical body systems.



### Cranberry Complex<sup>†</sup>

Suggested Use: **Dosing by weight\*\***

MediHerb<sup>®</sup> Cranberry Complex, a specific formulation containing Cranberry fruit juice concentrate, herbal extracts of Crataeva stem bark and Uva Ursi leaf, and Buchu leaf essential oil.



### Marshmallow Root 1:5 Glycetract<sup>†</sup>

Suggested Use: **Dosing by weight\*\***

MediHerb<sup>®</sup> Marshmallow Root 1:5 Glycetract contains mucilage and other compounds, providing all the benefits of a Marshmallow extract without the alcohol.

## A Multimodal Approach to Urinary Tract Health

- An integrative approach to urinary tract health emphasizes the importance of prevention rather than merely treating existing conditions.
- Whole foods and herbs can play a crucial role in this paradigm by providing a foundation for overall health.
- Including omega-3 fatty acids from sources such as fish oil can help modulate inflammation within the urinary tract which is crucial for a proactive approach to urinary tract health.<sup>9</sup>
- The antioxidant properties of various whole foods can combat oxidative stress, including conditions affecting the urinary system.
- Prioritizing whole foods and herbs, veterinary professionals can foster a preventative approach that not only addresses urinary tract health but also enhances the overall quality of life for their pets.

## REFERENCES

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\*\*Please contact your Standard Process Representative for the Core Formulas and MediHerb for Pets dosing charts

<sup>†</sup> Only veterinary professionals should recommend the use of human dietary supplements for animals. This is intended to serve as a starting point for qualified veterinary professionals in making recommendations of human dietary supplements for animals. Qualified veterinary professionals are expected to apply their own professional judgment as to the appropriate use of human dietary supplements and the correct dose.