Rawhide: What are the Benefits?

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

So many facts and so-called facts regarding rawhide are debated that clients don't know what to think. We thought it would be helpful to clear some of these up for you.

Is rawhide safe?

A major US medical school once conducted a laboratory test to answer this question. The results showed that in groups of test dogs, even in those fed rawhide three times a day, there were no ill effects.

Dogs will swallow pieces of rawhide, and these will pass easily through the digestive tract. Although choking or intestinal obstruction with rawhide is very rare, it could potentially occur and common-sense prevention measures should be taken. A dog and a rawhide product should never be left together unsupervised. Some dogs may quickly chew and swallow large pieces of rawhide. When your dog has chewed on a piece of rawhide to the point of it becoming soft, take that rawhide chew away and substitute another. Allow the softened rawhide to dry and harden, and it can then be given back to the dog.

Is rawhide good for my dog's teeth?

Like many classic favorites, there is nothing that withstands chewing, yet stays soft enough not to damage teeth like rawhide. Chewing rawhide has the beneficial effect of removing plaque from the animals' teeth and keeping them cleaner, important because periodontal disease is a real problem in many adult dogs.

Will rawhide help my dog's stress level?

Chewing is a natural urge for any dog and can help alleviate boredom, which is one cause of stress. Rawhide can redirect chewing from inappropriate items like furniture, shoes, remote controls, or other forbidden objects.

We feel that rawhide is a good all-around choice for dogs, if they are supervised when chewing. Supervision should be used when your dog is playing with any object, including toys and bones.

Is rawhide made in the United States automatically safer than rawhide that is made in South American countries or Canada?

Although better quality white rawhide bones generally come from the United States or one of the beef-producing South American countries, country of origin is no guarantee of quality. There are some bones made in the USA that we refuse to carry. We toured and inspected many plants before we found one that lived up to our high quality standards. We have witnessed the manufacturing process, have seen the methods used to treat the hides, and observed each step in their production. The small U.S. manufacturer that supplies our private label bones takes pride in their product and feels the same way about quality that we do. This gives us the assurance to confidently stand behind the bones we recommend.

*Unauthorized use of any images, thumbnails, illustrations, descriptions, article content, or registered trademarks of **Foster & Smith, Inc.** is strictly prohibited under copyright law. Site content, including photography, descriptions, pricing, promotions, and availability are subject to change without notice. These restrictions are necessary in order to protect not only our copyrighted intellectual property, but also the health of pets, since articles or images that are altered or edited after download could result in misinformation that may harm companion animals, aquatic life, or native species.*