



K9Chiro Quickies

with Dr. Eileen Haworth DC

August 2010

The Food Code

De Vinci is not the only one with a code. The name of your dog food is coded according to FDA rules.

If the meat on the dog food label is named with the connotation "for dogs" or "dog food", 95% of the product must be the named meat. That excludes the water content of the food. So, "Beef for Dogs", must be 95% beef.

When a label reads "nuggets", "dinner", "entre", "platter", etc., Only 25% of the meat named must be in the food. That doesn't include the water content. With water content the amount of the named meat may be as low as 10%. "Beef Doggy Dinner" could have as little as 10% beef.

If the food is labeled "Dog Food with Beef", only 3% of the named meat must be beef.

These rules apply only to the named meat. If you read the label, other meat may be in the food. If your dog has allergies, or you chose not to feed a certain protein make sure to check the contents of any food. If you are conscientious about your dog's food, read the label.

To crack the code you must be armed with the knowledge of this terminology.



Did you know?

Most of us know that things like snail bait are poisonous to dogs. Did you know that you also need to keep blood meal, bone meal and other fertilizers away from pets?

Top dogs in Los Angeles

According to the AKC, the top dog breeds registered in Los Angeles zip codes in 2009 were:

1. Bulldog
2. Labrador Retriever
3. Golden Retriever
4. German Shepherd Dog
5. Yorkshire Terrier

We've got the Beat!

Your dog is very musical. "She's got the beat". That's how we talk about gait in dogs. "The beat".

Why discuss gait? It's part of how judges make decisions in conformation competitions because it's vital to the way a dog is built. Watching a dog's gait can tell us if the dog may be injured. Different gaits are characteristic of particular breeds.

I watch dogs' gait to help determine what areas may need chiropractic adjustment. The way a dog moves can even reveal what work a dog was born to perform. Gait analysis is a window into your dog's health and well-being.

The Technical Stuff

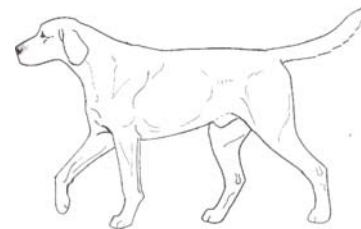
There are symmetrical and asymmetrical gaits.

A couple of symmetrical gaits are walk, and trot. The two sides of the animal mirror each other.

The typical asymmetrical dog gait is the gallop. The movement of each side of the animal is not the same.

Walk

The walk is a four beat lateral gait. It's symmetrical as the legs on one side move and then the legs of the other side move.



The dog lifts the feet as follows:

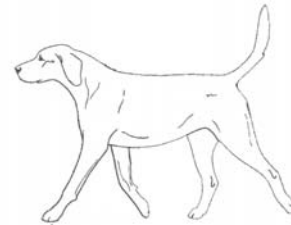
- Right hind leg lifts (first beat)
- Right fore leg lifts (second beat)
- Left hind leg lifts (third beat)
- Left fore leg lifts (fourth beat)

Very slow walking can highlight lameness.



Trot

The trot is a two beat diagonal gait. It is an asymmetrical gait as movement of a leg follows movement of a leg on one side on the opposite side.



The pattern of the gait:

- Right hind leg/left fore leg lift at the same time (first beat)
- Left hind leg / right fore leg lift at the same time (second beat)



Short backed dogs with long legs may not be able to trot as the fore and hind legs may interfere with one another. These dogs may trot with the hind not exactly following the front. This is called "crabbing" and can cause or is caused by a rotated pelvis.

The trot is the preferred gait when watching for lameness.

Gallop

The gallop is a four beat gait. It is used for high-speed locomotion. During the gallop there is a point where all four legs are off the ground at the same time.

There are two types of gallop in dogs. They are:

1. Rotary or double suspension
2. Transverse or single suspension

Rotary (think fast running Grey hound)



Take off is initiated from hind legs

First suspension the dog's body is in full extension. No feet on the ground.

First a fore foot touches the ground. (first beat)

Second forefoot touches the ground (second beat)

The second suspension phase occurs after the second forefoot leaves the ground.

The hind feet land almost together (third and fourth beat)

Transverse/single suspension

Take off is initiated at the front end. The suspension phase has all four limbs gathered under the animal.

The first foot to hit the ground is a hind foot. (first beat)

The second foot to hit the ground is a hind foot. (second beat)

The front foot on the same side as the second rear foot comes down as the first hind foot rises. (third beat)

The second front foot hits the ground and the dog prepares for another stride.

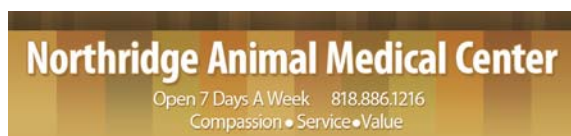
Watching Gait- What you can do

When watching your dog move, don't try to follow exact footfall. Instead, watch to see that each step is about equal to its counterpart. i.e. both hind legs travel equidistant in one step.

Those of you really interested in knowing that your dog's stride is even, can test for it. Test the stride length. Wet the dogs back feet. Walk the dog in a straight line on dry concrete. You will see the wet tracks. They should be approximately the same length from toe off to footfall. You can do the same with the front feet.

Most of all, simply observe your dog's movement. If you observe carefully, you will be the best analyst of how your dog moves. You may get better than the professionals at your dog's movement. It's especially important for performance dogs, because you quickly see any aberration of movement, and get help for any lameness. Or, you may just get to appreciate the beat and beauty of a nicely moving animal.

Chiropractic Care, by Veterinary referral, is available at the following animal hospitals.
Out of the area? Please contact K9Chiro@usa.net or 310-451-8045 for a referral



Northridge, CA 818-886-1216



California Veterinary Hospital
Gardena, CA
310-323-6867