

01 WHY IT MATTERS

The mouth, the regulator and the living whole

STATUS AND SCOPE

This is the shortest entrance to the Raw Meaty Bones Campaign and the Cybernetic Hypothesis. It distinguishes a testable proposition from established fact, makes no human medical recommendation and does not suggest that pain or disease are desirable for an individual animal.

The mouth may regulate the hunter. The hunter may regulate the ecosystem.

That is the central reason a campaign beginning with pet food matters to veterinary medicine, dentistry, human medicine, evolutionary biology, ecology, cybernetics and public institutions. The mouth is not merely an entrance to the body. In mammalian carnivores it may be a biological and ecological control interface.

1. The regulator of the regulator

Food structure, tearing, ripping, chewing, saliva, teeth, gums, microorganisms, blood flow, immune responses, pain and behaviour meet at the oral interface. Changes there can alter the condition, feeding capacity, social performance, reproductive success and survival of the animal.

Where the animal is an apex or higher-order ecological regulator, those changes need not end with the individual. They may alter pressure on prey, competitors, scavengers, microorganisms and the wider food web. In that sense, gums and their associated microbial and immune processes may help regulate the regulator.

This is not a claim that an apex carnivore controls an ecosystem alone. Living systems are webs of mutual regulation. Prey, resources, microbes, climate, competitors, disease and behaviour also constrain the carnivore. The Cybernetic Hypothesis asks whether the mouth is one neglected point through which those reciprocal controls are expressed.

THE CENTRAL RESEARCH PROPOSITION

If oral processes modulate the fitness, feeding capacity, reproduction and survival of a higher-order ecological regulator, then those processes may contribute indirectly to population and ecosystem regulation.

FOR A YOUNG CHILD

Living things stay alive by noticing change and correcting course. Health is when the corrections work. Disease develops when correction fails or makes the problem worse. The mouth can affect the hunter, and the hunter can affect the land.

2. Life, health, disease and death

There is no single, complete consensus definition governing all of medicine, veterinary medicine and biology. Systems, evolutionary and ecological ideas exist, but daily research, teaching and treatment are still commonly organised around named diseases, separated organs, isolated mechanisms and one-directional causal arrows.

The Cybernetic Hypothesis supplies a simpler organising framework:

Concept	Common operational emphasis	Cybernetic interpretation
Life	Structures, mechanisms and biochemical processes.	Nested, interdependent systems continually communicating, regulating and adapting.

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Health	Absence or control of diagnosable disorder.	The capacity to preserve viable organisation through effective feedback, resilience and restraint.
Disease	A local defect, pathogen, lesion or pathway to identify and correct.	Disturbed communication, failed regulation, lost restraint or feedback that has become pathological amplification.
Death	The terminal outcome for the patient.	A catastrophe for the individual that may also alter populations, food webs and ecological regulation.
Treatment	Correction, suppression or removal of the identified abnormality.	Often necessary, but incomplete when the system that repeatedly generates the abnormality remains unchanged.

Periodontal disease remains painful and destructive for the individual animal. The hypothesis does not romanticise suffering. It asks whether a process experienced as disease at one level may also have regulatory consequences at another level of biological organisation.

3. Why raw meaty bones provide an immediate test

Natural food is not only a chemical package of protein, fat, vitamins and minerals. Its physical form creates time, muscular work, saliva flow, mechanical cleansing, microbial disturbance, behavioural engagement and feedback from the mouth to the whole animal. A pulverised or ultra-processed ration can supply calories while removing much of that function.

Domestication changes the natural loop. A wild carnivore with a failing mouth may obtain less food, chew less and decline rapidly. A domestic animal may continue to receive calories, shelter and medical support while the feeding system remains unchanged. A comparatively rapid natural correction can thereby become prolonged pain, infection, recurring treatment and systemic amplification.

Raw meaty bones therefore have two roles. They are an immediate practical proposal for restoring food structure and oral function in domestic carnivores. They are also the missing natural comparator against which kibble, canned food, commercial raw products, BARF-style formulas, prey-model prescriptions and mixed regimes should be tested.

PREVENTION BEFORE RECURRING TREATMENT

Treatment manages consequences. Foundational prevention changes the conditions that generate them. Targeted prophylaxis, including vaccination and parasite control, remains genuine prevention; it does not replace the need to correct upstream diet, oral function and environmental conditions.

4. What science must now do

The appropriate response is neither belief nor dismissal. The Cybernetic Hypothesis should be treated as a serious provisional research programme. Cybernetics does not evade causation; it looks for causation in loops, relationships and changes over time rather than insisting upon one isolated arrow.

- **Restore the comparator.** Compare whole carcass and raw meaty bones feeding with the principal industrial and commercial alternatives over meaningful periods.
- **Study the two developmental pinch points.** Follow oral microbiology, gingival response, immunity and systemic markers during deciduous teething and eruption of the permanent dentition.
- **Measure both directions.** Ask how oral disturbance affects the body and how systemic illness, immunity, pain, appetite and behaviour feed back into the mouth.
- **Use dogs as a compressed-life-course model.** Their shorter lifespans, shared human environments, accessible mouths and varied body sizes permit repeated observation from development to old age.
- **Map and model the whole.** Construct causal-loop, network, system-dynamics and agent-based models; derive predictions; test them; revise the model; and return every finding to the microbial, oral, whole-animal, population and ecological levels.
- **Use AI as a servant, not a substitute.** Pattern detection cannot repair missing comparators, poor measurements or questions that were never asked.

5. What the campaign asks

1. Protect dogs and cats now by placing biologically appropriate food and normal oral function ahead of recurring treatment wherever practicable.
2. Teach that life and health depend upon communication, feedback, adaptation and restraint, and that disease may be a disorder of regulation rather than an isolated enemy.
3. Test the Cybernetic Hypothesis through comparative, longitudinal, developmental and ecological research.
4. Examine how research funding, professional education, commercial influence and disciplinary boundaries determine which questions and comparators enter the evidence base.
5. Apply the Five-Part Public Interest Test to industrial and commercial feeding claims: biological suitability; functional food structure and oral feedback; causal and evidential integrity; public-interest orientation and knowledge effects; and whole-system consequences.

The Raw Meaty Bones Campaign matters because it identifies the mouth as a possible regulatory interface between microbes, the individual carnivore and the wider ecosystem - and provides domestic dogs and cats as an immediate practical and scientific means of investigating that proposition.

Routes from this page

- **Document 02 - The Raw Meaty Bones Campaign.** The fuller practical, scientific, historical, methodological and public-interest account.
- **Document 03 - How to Read Raw Meaty Bones.** Short reading routes through the book for different audiences.
- **Cybernetic Hypothesis page.** The scientific papers, working documents and developing research programme.
- **The Raw Meaty Bones Record.** The documentary foundation for provenance, commercial claims and the Five-Part Public Interest Test.

Selected sources and links

1. Raw Meaty Bones: Promote Health. <https://www.thepetfoodcon.com/raw-meaty-bones/> - book page and full text
2. Cybernetic hypothesis of periodontal disease in mammalian carnivores. <https://rawmeatybones.com/pdf/periodontal-cyber.pdf> - Journal of Veterinary Dentistry, 1994
3. Periodontal Medicine and the Limitations of Linear Causality: Time for a Cybernetic Framework. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/jre.70118> - Journal of Periodontal Research, 2026
4. Cybernetic Hypothesis webpage and archive. <https://www.thepetfoodcon.com/cybernetic-hypothesis-of-periodontal-disease-in-mammalian-carnivores/>
5. The Raw Feeding Claims Audit and Five-Part Public Interest Test. https://www.thepetfoodcon.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/08_The_Raw_Feeding_Claims_Audit_Purpose_Method_and_Evidence_Standards_Publication_Ready-1.pdf
6. The Raw Meaty Bones Record. <https://www.thepetfoodcon.com/raw-meaty-bones-record/>

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