A healthy diet is important for everyone, even your pets! When picking out the right food for your pet, there are important things to consider.

Raw pet foods can make people and pets sick
CDC does not recommend feeding raw diets to pets. Germs like Salmonella and Listeria bacteria have been found in raw pet foods, even packaged ones sold in stores. These germs can make your pet sick. Your family can also get sick by handling the raw food or by taking care of your pet.

Dry and canned pet food also can be contaminated with germs. Before making any change to your pet’s diet, talk with your veterinarian.

Tips to stay healthy while feeding your pet
Always wash your hands with soap and water right after handling pet food or treats; this is the most important step to prevent illness. When possible, store pet food and treats away from where human food is stored or prepared and away from reach of young children.
Don’t use your pet’s feeding bowl to scoop food. Use a clean, dedicated scoop, spoon, or cup.
Always follow any storage instructions on pet food bags or containers.

If you decide to feed your pet raw food
Wash your hands and surfaces thoroughly after handling raw pet food.
Wash your hands with soap and water right after handling any raw pet food.
Clean and disinfect all surfaces that the raw food touched, like countertops, microwaves, refrigerators and objects like knives, forks, and bowls.

Safely store and handle raw pet food.
Freeze raw pet food until you are ready to use it.
Keep raw pet food away from other food in your refrigerator or freezer.
Don’t thaw frozen raw pet foods on a countertop or in a sink.
Throw away any food your pet doesn’t eat.

Safely play with your pet after he or she eats.
Don’t let your pet lick around your mouth and face after eating.
If you play with your pet after they have eaten pet food, wash your hands and any other parts of your body that licked, with soap and water.

If you feed your pet reptile or amphibian
Don’t let your pet lick any of your open wounds or areas with broken skin.

Children and pets
• Young children are at risk for illness because their immune systems are still developing and because they are more likely than others to put things into their mouths.
• Children younger than 5 years old should not touch or eat pet food, treats, or supplements.
• Adults should supervise young children when washing hands.

www.cdc.gov/features/pet-food-safety/