Anatomy of a Nutritional Recommendation

1: Gather a comprehensive history.

**What to say:**
“Tell me everything [pet’s name] eats throughout the day, starting first thing in the morning on through bedtime including meals, treats, supplements, and people food.”

**Why it works:**
This type of question elicits more complete information, provides a structure to answers, and sets a clear expectation for the detail you want and need.

2: Acknowledge the range of options and make a specific recommendation for what to feed and why.

**What to say:**
“There are a variety of food options available for [pet’s name]. Let’s talk about your options and which of those options I believe is the best fit for [pet’s name].”

3: Educate pet owners on the value and benefits of feeding the recommended diet for their pet.

**What to say:**
“There are a variety of food options. Let’s talk about the benefits and value of the different food options for your pet.”

**Why it works:**
Pet owners may not make the leap from what a specific pet food — therapeutic or otherwise — does and its benefits to their pet. By clearly communicating the benefits and value of different options, you will empower the client to make the right choice for their pet.

4: Make a clear recommendation.

**What to say:**
“I recommend [pet food] because it provides our best opportunity to get [pet’s name] on track medically speaking/to keep [pet’s name] as healthy as possible for as long as possible.”

5: Check in with clients to see what they really think of your recommendation and if it’s doable.

**What to say:**
“What do you think about making this recommended change? Does it feel doable with realities at home? What concerns do you have?”

**Why it works:**
It lets clients know that these are continuing conversations, and you genuinely want to address their concerns and help them be successful in implementing your pet nutrition recommendations.

To learn more, watch this free, one-hour webinar hosted by Jason Coe, DVM, PhD. bit.ly/2YLB73a

© 2021 American Animal Hospital Association (aaha.org). All rights reserved.