

FELINE NUTRITION

Proper feeding is unquestionably one of the most important factors in raising and maintaining a healthy cat. Be sure that the foods you choose to feed your cat are 100% nutritionally complete for the particular stage of your cat's life. A good quality cat food will supply all the protein, minerals, and vitamins needed.

Cats should not be fed human food, dog food, or guesswork diets. Cats are unique pets that require specific nutrients in balanced amounts, in other words, a diet that is scientifically formulated for the cat. The best way to provide a nutritionally complete, proper diet for your cat is to feed it a regular diet of quality commercial cat food which is backed by years of extensive knowledge in feline nutrition. Pet foods are one area where you usually get what you pay for!

KITTEN NUTRITION:

Young kittens should be fed frequently, at least four times/day. Because a kitten is growing rapidly, it will need a diet specially formulated for this life stage, with extra protein, calcium, vitamins, and minerals. An excellent feeding program for young kittens is to feed a combination of both canned and dry foods.

By 6-7 months, kittens have his/her permanent teeth. It may now prefer to nibble dry food throughout the day. This is acceptable unless it starts to show signs of being overweight. Should this occur, you must limit the amount of food that you are giving your cat throughout the day, and encourage exercise.

ADULT NUTRITION:

After the cat reaches adulthood, you should start feeding a maintenance formula. These foods will keep your cat healthy and happy while preventing obesity and excess amounts of other nutrients that may be harmful to vital internal organs.

It is best to maintain consistency in the diet. Cats do not need a variety of foods, unless you have taught them to expect that. It is important to preserve routine feeding in a cat. Always feed at the same time and in the same place. Because some cats like to take their food out of the dish, you may want to put the food dish on a placemat.

There should always be fresh water available for your cat. Change the water daily.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR FEEDING YOUR CAT:

- Feed a diet that is 100% complete and balanced for the cat's particular life stage: pediatric, adulthood, and senior cat.
- Provide plenty of fresh drinking water for your cat at all times.
- Don't substitute milk for water, or milk for a meal of solid food.
- Do not feed your cat table scraps. This is not a complete and balanced diet, and can lead to nutritional excesses or deficiencies and future health problems.
- Don't feed your cat raw fish because it contains thiaminase, an enzyme that destroys Vitamin B1.
- Don't feed your cat any food that may contain small sharp bones (such as chicken bones). These bones may splinter and cause choking or digestive problems.
- Avoid feeding raw meats because of the possibility of parasitic or bacterial infections.
- Excessive raw egg whites in the diet may lead to certain vitamin deficiencies.
- Avoid supplements not recommended by your veterinarian. Quality commercial cat foods contain everything the pet needs in most cases. Indiscriminate supplementation can create nutritional excesses that can be harmful.



Southwest Florida Veterinary Services
12288 SW CR 769
Lake Suzy, FL 34269
941 625-6610