

Feeding and Caring for Your Cat

Ruxton Animal Hospital · 8014 Bellona Ave. · Baltimore, MD 21204 · 410-296-0890

Feeding: Cats are obligate carnivores. They do not have the ability to tell when they are full if their diet contains a large percentage of carbohydrates. Cats' diets should consist primarily of protein and fats and be formulated in a canned form. It is difficult to manufacture a dry food that has an adequate level of protein and fats to meet a cat needs. Canned foods may contain an antioxidant which may contribute to hyperthyroidism. Weighing the pluses and minuses it is still best in my opinion to feed a diet that consists primarily of canned cat food. Kittens should be fed 3-4 small meals a day. At 6 months, two meals a day are recommended. After a cat is neutered its basic metabolic rate drops 10 to 20%. Therefore, its food intake must be monitored or it will gain weight. Feeding a measured amount of canned food twice a day is suggested. This works even in multi-cat households. No supplementation is recommended since most foods have an adequate supply of vitamins and minerals. Homemade diets are difficult to formulate and inconvenient. Feeding a homemade diet cannot insure the availability of all nutrients in the right quantities needed by the cat. It is safer to stick to a commercially available, nutritionally balanced diet. Use a food where the label says that it meets AAFCO standards (American Association of Food Control Officials standards). Suggested low carbohydrate canned foods include Friskies, Iams' kitten, Figaro and Fancy Feast. Hill also makes a variety of canned kitten and adult cat foods that are recommended. If your cat is already overweight we recommend OM (Obesity Management) by Purina which is a prescription type food that is available through our office. Please consult with the doctor about these diet foods. Again the emphasis is on canned products rather than on any particular brand. If you must use a dry food OM does come as a dry formula and for normal weight cats Iams Max Cal dry is also available.

Cat Litter: Use a non-scented, non-dusty clumping or non-clumping type of cat litter. One litter box per cat is recommended.

Scratching Post: Purchase cardboard or a rope type of scratching post. Place it in a prominent area in your home. You can place catnip on the post to make it more attractive to your cat. Trim your cat's nails with a "Resco" type of nail trimmer. See display area in our waiting room if you wish to purchase a nail clipper. See Nail Trimming on our "Grooming" sheet. Declawing is an option you can discuss with the doctor. See "Declawing" information sheet.

Brushing: Longhaired cats can be brushed with a slicker brush. See display area in the waiting room area.

See "**Wellness Program for Cats**" sheet for a discussion of **leukemia** and FIV testing, **vaccinations, parasite control, dental care, worming,** and **heartworms.**

The Cornell Book of Cats: by Mordecai Siegal is a medical reference book that every cat owner should purchase. It costs approximately \$35. Most on-line and regular bookstores can get it for you.