



East Island Animal Hospital  
東 區 動 物 醫 院

## Nutrition and Healthy Eating for Cats.

A cat should always be fed a diet suitable for his or her life stage.

- After being weaned from the mother, cats are generally fed a kitten food.
- At around 9-12 months of age, they should switch to an adult cat food
- At around 7-10 years of age, cats usually change to being fed a diet designed for senior animals
- Special diets, including prescription medical diets, are also sometimes recommended depending on a pet's individual needs.

Diets can either be commercial (available as dry or canned food from vets, pet stores or supermarkets), or home made.

High quality commercial diets are generally nutritionally complete and balanced, containing all necessary vitamins and minerals.

- They are formulated specifically for the life stage (puppy, adult, senior), and sometimes the breed or type of cat.
- Dry (kibble or biscuit) food is nutritionally very similar to canned food, but is usually more economical, cleaner and encourages better dental development.
- Dry food is recommended to be the major component of most pets diets.
- The quality of the food is also important, and there are significant differences between the lower priced budget food and the premium range food.
- Calcium should never be supplemented to a balanced cat food.

Home-made diets are also an option for feeding cats, although there are some very specific nutritional requirements that cats have for essential amino acids such as taurine, and feeding a cat a completely home-cooked diet is only recommended for very experienced owners.

- Home-made diets are often much more difficult to formulate and cook, and are usually more expensive than a commercial diet.
- It is very important to ensure that all necessary minerals and vitamins are present in the correct amounts and ratios when formulating a home-made diet. An unbalanced diet can result in poor immunity, lower energy levels or poor overall health.
- Note that plain meat or meat and rice (even with vitamin supplements) is not a complete or balanced diet.

Your cat can also be given occasional treats such as fish or meat snacks and biscuit chew treats. Cooked bones can splinter and should not be fed. Other foods that cats should never be fed include chocolate, coffee, tea, onions, large amounts of garlic, sultanas or any food that may cause a blockage such as mango seeds or corn cobs. Also, cats should not be given human medications or supplements.

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