

Feeding your kitten or cat



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Due to their rapid growth and development, it is very important that kittens are fed an appropriate diet. At least 80 per cent of a kitten's diet should be made up of a good quality, fully balanced kitten food: kittens are generally very happy to have a diet entirely composed of kitten food.

Special balanced diet

The professional range of kitten foods (e.g. Hill's, Royal Canin, Eukanuba, Advance) are not only completely balanced kitten diets but they also offer a very high standard of nutrition and high digestibility. Because of the high digestibility of the professional range of diets, a smaller quantity of these diets generally needs to be fed compared to many supermarket brands. A full range of the professional diets is available at our clinic and our staff are trained to be able to guide you as to what best suits your kitten. These diets are very palatable but a full money back guarantee is also offered if your kitten will not eat the food.

If you would like to add some variety to the diet, you can add a small amount of mince to the food. Avoid giving your cat large quantities of raw fish, as this may cause them to develop thiamine deficiency. Clean water should always be available; milk is not recommended as it can cause diarrhoea, as many cats are lactose intolerant.

Feeding habits

Kittens should be fed at least three times a day until six months of age; after this you may reduce to and maintain on twice-a-day feeding. Kittens will often self-regulate their feeding, eating when they feel like it, and food may be left down all the time if they prefer this. However, care needs to be taken as your cat matures to ensure it does not become overweight if you are going to allow 'free-range' feeding.

Most commercial foods will have feeding guidelines on the side of the pack, with the recommended amount to feed per day for your kitten's or cat's weight. Please remember that this is only a guide; just like people, different cats need different amounts of food. If you are concerned about how much to feed your kitten or cat, please discuss this with the vet or our nurses.

With any changes to feeding, it is always best to introduce a new food gradually, increasing the proportion of the new food over four to five days. This will help to prevent any stomach upsets and diarrhoea from rapid food changes.

Precautions

Please ensure that your kitten or cat does not have access to lilies: they are poisonous to cats and even ingestion of a small amount can rapidly cause kidney failure. Likewise do not give your cat any medications, in particular paracetamol, unless approved by the vet. Many treatments that may be harmless to us can be toxic to cats.