

Health and dietary care for cats & kittens / Pedigree Petfoods.

Contributors

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There's one diet that lets you eat what you like.
If you happen to be a cat.



That diet is Whiskas and it's the perfect diet for cats. It has the taste, texture, and smell that cats prefer, and it has the ideal balance of proteins, nutrients and vitamins that every cat needs. But there's more to the

Whiskas diet.

With a choice of fourteen different recipes, your cats can have all the choice they like as well as the nutrition they need.

So if you're looking for the perfect diet, and you hap-

pen to be a cat, then look no further than Whiskas.

whiskas

MORE CATS THAN EVER BEFORE
NOW PREFER WHISKAS.



Whiskas is a registered trademark for appropriate food for cats.

Talking Pets is a new information service for pet owners and animal lovers which has been produced in association with Pedigree Petfoods Education Centre.

Your best source of advice and information on the care and health of pets is your veterinary surgeon. Make a note of his name and number here

Name

Address

Phone

If you need further information about feeding your pet, please write to:
PEDIGREE PETFOODS
EDUCATION CENTRE,
P.O. BOX 77,
FREEPOST,
BURTON-ON-TRENT,
DE11 7BR

Illustrated brochures giving details of school resource material and free loan film or video cassette service are also available from this address.

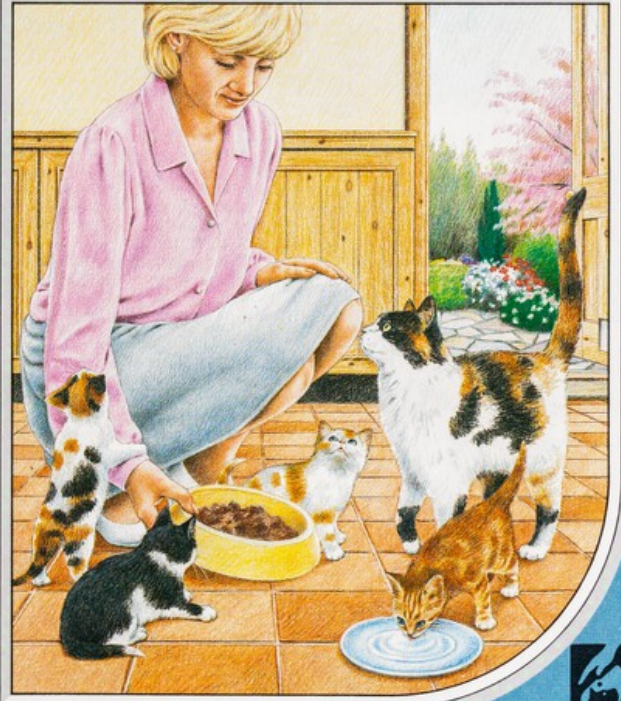


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**Talking
PETS**

*Health and
dietary care for
cats & kittens*



One of the series of Talking Pets leaflets issued in the interests of responsible pet ownership.

A balanced diet to keep your cat healthy and fit



Like any other animal, a cat needs a well balanced diet in order to keep fit and healthy. For a balanced diet the food that a cat eats needs to contain a full complement of protein, fat, vitamins and minerals in the right proportions.

It is possible for a cat owner to prepare a home-made diet for a cat but getting the balance of nutrients right needs a great deal of skill and specialised knowledge. For this reason, the responsible pet owner will find it easier and more convenient to adopt a diet using one of the proprietary brands of cat food which offer a guaranteed balanced diet.

Choosing a diet for your cat

Prepared pet foods such as those manufactured by Pedigree Petfoods, when fed as directed, will provide a balanced diet for cats of all ages.

Pedigree Petfoods produce a range of cat foods to suit both cat and owner. The wide range of varieties available in the Company's three canned cat food brands ensures that a cat can be fed a varied but consistent diet.

Fully grown cats may be fed entirely on canned cat foods such as Whiskas, Kitekat or Katkins. You can provide a complete balanced and interesting diet

for your cat by choosing from the wide range of varieties available. To cater for the special needs of young cats, Pedigree Petfoods also produce Whiskas Kitten Food. Brekkies dry cat foods are a useful way of providing a change of taste and texture and can be fed a few at a time as a treat. Fresh drinking water should always be available to all cats, whatever their diet.

How much food does one cat need?

Individually cats differ widely in the amount of food that they need and this is influenced by the cat's size, age, activity and condition. Most cats can regulate their food intake and if the food on offer contains the right dietary balance they will usually eat the proper amount. Unless your cat is fat there is no need to restrict the quantity given at any one meal.

The feeding guide for adult cats shows the amount of cat food that you should offer to your pet: remember that this is only intended as a guide.

Feeding guide for normal adult cats

Canned Cat Foods

Amounts to give each day

(If your cat is big, or is very active, give the larger amount.)

	Giant Cans	Large Cans	Small Cans
Whiskas	½ - ⅔	¾ - 1 ¼	1 ½ - 2 ½
Kitekat	—	¾ - 1 ¼	—
Katkins	½ - ⅔	¾ - 1 ¼	—

By feeding these products as recommended you can be certain that your cat is getting all the minerals, vitamins and other nutrients needed for good health.



Cats can be fussy eaters

Cats are sometimes fastidious and can develop the habit of being over fussy about their food — even to the point of almost starving themselves if they don't get the food that they want. Obviously, this should be discouraged as it can be harmful to the cat's health.

The range of varieties offered by Pedigree Petfoods brands helps owners to overcome this problem. Get your cat used to variety feeding and there will be no problems with him obstinately refusing any change.

When feeding a home-prepared diet, bear in mind that fish and meat alone do

not provide everything that a cat needs. You should supplement a home-made diet with the following: sterilised bonemeal for calcium; meat or yeast extract for thiamin and a teaspoonful of cod liver oil once a week for vitamins A and D. These nutrients need to be measured carefully as over-supplementing the diet can also be harmful.

Cats prefer to eat their food at room temperature and food served straight from the fridge may not be acceptable to some cats. If you do serve canned food from the fridge, remember to let it stand for a while to reach room temperature — your cat will prefer it that way.

Don't let your cat overeat

If your cat shows a tendency to overeat, the simplest thing to do is to reduce the amount of food that you offer the cat at any one mealtime. In addition, you should stop giving tidbits from the table and cut down on between meal 'treats'. Neutered cats in particular may have a tendency to take less exercise which can lead to a gain in weight.

If your cat seems unwell and is also overweight, you should consult your vet for professional advice.

A saucerful of milk

Many cats enjoy drinking a little milk every day but there are a few individuals that react adversely to it; they can have trouble digesting it and may develop diarrhoea. If this is the case with your cat, you will have to restrict him to water.

Water is essential — a fresh bowlful should always be available, even if the cat has milk as well. Clean out the water bowl frequently.

Cleanliness and hygiene

Cats are naturally clean animals and spend a lot of time washing and grooming themselves. To a great extent, you can rely on them to look after their own well being but you should follow a few simple rules.



Feed your cat at least twice a day at set times and reserve a special place on the floor for his food dishes. Your cat should be given his own dishes of water, food and milk and these should be washed up and stored separately from the family crockery. Wash your cat's dishes after every meal and never put your own plate down for your cat to feed from. Throw away all uneaten food and any remaining milk after your cat has had a reasonable opportunity to eat what he wants, say 20-30 minutes.

Cats are often affectionate but you should discourage your pet from licking your face or the faces of your children.

The cat tray

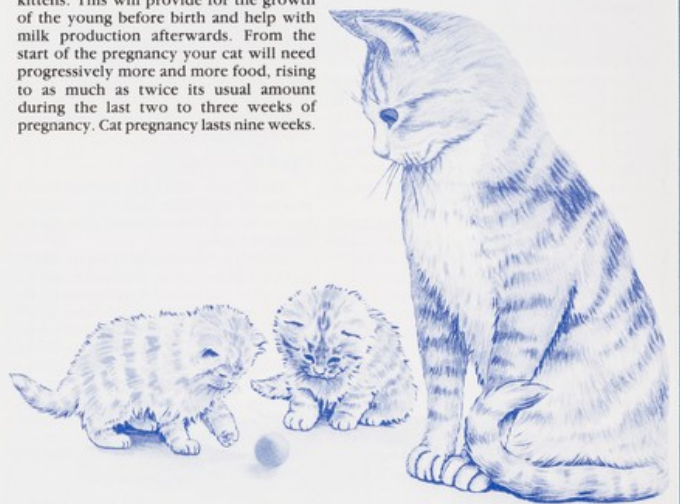
Cats are very fastidious about their toilet habits and if allowed out regularly they will make their own arrangements. If your cat spends a lot of time indoors, you should give him a proper litter tray filled with hygienic granular litter such as Thomas' Cat Litter. The tray should be inspected regularly and any soiled waste matter removed — there are special tools available for this job — and the waste disposed of. Empty the tray completely at regular intervals, wash and dry it thoroughly and refill with clean cat litter.

Always wash your hands thoroughly after handling the litter tray.

Mother and kittens

Extra feeds for pregnant cats

If you think your cat is pregnant, the first thing you should do is consult your vet. A cat needs extra food when having kittens. This will provide for the growth of the young before birth and help with milk production afterwards. From the start of the pregnancy your cat will need progressively more and more food, rising to as much as twice its usual amount during the last two to three weeks of pregnancy. Cat pregnancy lasts nine weeks.



Raising kittens

A cat rearing kittens may need up to three times as much food as normal in order to be able to produce enough nourishing milk for the kittens, particularly when they are three to four weeks old. It will also be necessary to feed your cat more frequently and to vary the diet to ensure an adequate intake. Allow the cat as much milk as she wants, provided that she can digest it properly.

Cats enjoy a variety of foods. When suckling their young, cats can be encouraged to supplement their energy intake by being offered occasional changes

from their usual food, from Whiskas to Kitekat or Katkins, for example, or ring the changes between the varieties. Whiskas Kitten Food is also palatable and highly nutritious and Brekkies can be offered as a useful snack food.

Continue the extra feeding until the kittens are weaned. Then gradually cut back on the additional food until your cat is eating her normal amount again.

The general health and condition of the mother is the best guide. Watch for signs of weight loss or gain and adjust her meals accordingly.

Diet for growing kittens

Since they are growing, young cats need relatively large amounts of food. Good quality all the goodness cats need: protein to build muscles, fat for energy, calcium and phosphorus to develop bones, as well as trace minerals and vitamins.

Kittens don't need milk with their food. Make sure that there is a supply of fresh water for them.

Kittens are usually sufficiently active and well developed to begin taking supplementary food at the age of four weeks. By this time they will be getting less nourishment from their mother's milk. At this age, kittens should be offered canned foods that are soft, moist and easy to eat.

Whiskas Kitten Food has been designed to fulfil a kitten's complex nutritional requirements. The food itself is finely minced and very tasty and so is the ideal way to feed a young cat easily and economically. It can be introduced gradually at this age well mashed and it may help if it has been slightly moistened.

By the age of six to eight weeks, kittens should be eating solid food happily and can be fully weaned.

After weaning, kittens aged seven to eight weeks should be fed at least three times a day. Whiskas Kitten Food is an ideal diet at this stage.

A growing appetite

Kittens grow very quickly so their appetite and need for food increases too.

Feeding guide for kittens

Age of kitten	Cans of Whiskas Kitten Food per day	Meals per day (split total quantity into the number shown)
Weaning to 2 months	½ - 1	4
2 - 4 months	1 - 1½	3
4 - 5 months	1½ - 1¾	3
5 - 6 months	1¾ - 2	2

Make sure that you increase the amount of food they get — it's hard to overfeed them and the best rule is to let them eat as much as they want at each meal, within reason. A good rule of thumb is to leave the food out for them for 20-30 minutes and then to dispose of what they don't eat after this time is over.

Up to the age of four to five months, kittens should be fed at least three times a day, their stomachs are still small and they can't hold a lot at once. This pattern can be reduced to twice a day from five months onwards. For actual amounts of food, see the table below.

Orphan kittens

There are various commercially produced substitute milks for orphan kittens — you should consult your vet for advice on these.

Newly born orphan kittens should be given a milk feed every two hours. As soon as possible, you should contact your vet for advice on their feeding and welfare. At the age of four weeks they should be offered a little solid food, such as Whiskas Kitten Food while reducing the milk feeds to three to four in the day and one at night.

During the next three to four weeks, more of the Whiskas Kitten Food should be used and the milk feed gradually eliminated. Milk should then be offered in a saucer.

Your cat's health

Neutering cats — spaying or castration

The operation of neutering female cats (queens) is known as spaying. The neutering of males (toms) is known as castration. Unless you definitely plan to breed from your cat, you will probably find it advantageous to have this done at an early age.

You should raise the matter with your vet when you take your cat in for vaccination. He can explain the pros and cons and tell you how the operation is carried out — it is quick and painless.

Vaccination

All kittens and cats should be vaccinated against three serious viral diseases: Feline Infectious Enteritis (F.I.E.) Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis (F.V.R.) and Feline Calicivirus (F.C.V.) The last two diseases combined are commonly called "Cat Flu".

All cats, not just pedigree cats, whatever their age, are susceptible to these diseases and vaccination is essential. The timing of vaccination depends on the brand of vaccine used by your vet and the particular disease patterns that are prevalent amongst cats in the area where you live. Two injections are required. The first is usually given when they are between 8 and 12 weeks old. Your veterinary practice will explain the programme they consider best for your kitten or cat.

A single annual booster injection is usually required to maintain immunity. Reputable boarding catteries will only accept cats with recent certificates of vaccination.

Some pedigree kittens or cats from rescue societies may have already commenced a vaccination programme. Always let your vet check any vaccine certificate issued to confirm whether protection is complete or not.

Health check

Make an appointment to see your vet about vaccination as soon as you get your cat or kitten, or when it is weaned if you have had it since birth. At the same time your vet will be able to make a complete health check and also advise you on any other routine procedures such as neutering, worming and flea control, which can be carried out at a later date. This is also a good opportunity for you to ask any questions you may have.

Your vet is an independent and professional advisor and the best source of reliable information you have. You would do well to follow his advice — your cat will be happier and healthier for it.

