



## **Feeding Your Cat**

### **General Tips**

- Always consult with your veterinarian regarding the best diet for your pet!
- Stainless steel bowls are preferred over ceramic and plastic, which are more porous and more likely to harbor bacteria even with thorough washing
- Wide, shallow bowls are preferred to avoid “whisker fatigue,” where constant rubbing of their whiskers against surfaces can lead to increased pain sensitivity in the area (a common reason some cats drink water by dunking their paws and licking the water off!)
- Water bowls should be changed/cleaned once a day
- Food bowls should be changed/cleaned each meal
- Warm water and dish soap is sufficient for cleaning food bowls – avoid use of harsh chemicals that may leave residue on bowls

### **Feeding Recommendations**

Fresh water should be available at all times.

- Some cats may prefer a water fountain that provides flowing water rather than a bowl

Offer ¼ cup of dry food and ~1.5oz of wet food twice a day

- Most large cans of cat food are 5.5-6oz, so please feed ¼ of a large can each meal
- Most small cans of cat food are 3oz., so please feed ½ of a small can each meal

**Recommended Brands:** Royal Canin, Hill’s/Science Diet, Purina, Iam’s, and Eukanuba

These 5 brands meet the WSAVA guidelines on nutrition. Please visit WSAVA’s website for more information on selecting the best food for your pets ([www.wsava.org](http://www.wsava.org)). Please always refer to your veterinarian’s recommendations.

### **The Wet vs Dry Debate**

Both wet and dry food have pros and cons. Dry food tends to be denser in calories and provides less hydration than wet food but has benefit in helping prevent tartar buildup on teeth. Wet food can adhere to teeth and cause tartar buildup more readily, but can have the benefit of having less calories (per volume than equivalent brand/formula dry food) and provides more hydration. We like to feed our cats both, unless otherwise directed by a veterinarian. If you are worried about your cat having adequate hydration, you can always add water into their food or even try a running water fountain!



### **Feeding Kittens**

Kittens have small stomachs and high energy needs – please feed them small, frequent meals. We recommend offering about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a small can of wet food and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of dry food three times a day until ~12 months of age.

### **Changing Diets**

Whenever transitioning diets, please do so gradually to avoid any upset to your cat's gastrointestinal tract (often in the form of diarrhea.) Start by offering a mixture of 75% "old" diet and 25% "new" diet for about a week, then offer a mixture of 50% "old" to 50% "new" for about another week , then offer a mixture of 25% "old" and 75% "new" for a final week. After about three weeks of gradual transition, offer 100% of the new diet.