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SYMPTOMS

- Increased water consumption
- Lack of appetite
- Lethargy
- Poor coat condition
- Weight loss
- Vomiting



DEXTER SUGGESTS

Ask our knowledgeable staff about our canned, home-cooked, and raw diet options.

More Resources:

- *Dr. Pitcairn's Complete Guide to Natural Health For Dogs & Cats*
- *Whole Health for Happy Cats*
- *The New Natural Cat*
- *Your Cat: simple new secrets for a longer, stronger life.*
- feline-nutrition.org
- littlebigcat.com
- catinfo.org

Kidney Health in Cats

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF CRD?

The list at the left is short but significant. By the time you see these symptoms the problem has advanced, and you should have your cat seen by a vet immediately for a thorough exam, including blood and urine analysis.

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE (CRD or CRF)?

In many instances kidney problems are a direct result of feeding dry food as the primary diet. Other causes include: genetic or congenital abnormalities, urinary tract obstructions, diabetes, poisons, trauma, and infections. In older cats it's often difficult to know the exact cause. Onset in older cats is usually gradual, though not inevitable, so preventative care is important.

SKIP THE DRY FOOD!

This is the #1 way to prevent and treat kidney problems in cats!

Cats are hardwired to get their moisture from their food, not by drinking separately; they simply don't have the thirst mechanism to drink enough water to offset the effects of dry food. Think big cats on the savannah – the carcass they eat is 70% water, whereas dry food is only about 8% water. Many cats that eat only dry food are chronically dehydrated, with overly-concentrated urine and improper pH. This predisposes them to kidney failure, bladder infections, and bladder stones.

Cats eating dry food are often overweight, another risk-factor for kidney and urinary problems. Cats often feel compelled to overeat when fed dry food in an attempt to get more protein (the dry food isn't a good source), and since dry food is often left out for cats to eat at will it is easy for them to overeat.

Dry food is high in carbohydrates, which are not only hard for cats to digest, they can cause pH imbalances. Beware of dry foods advertised as high protein – the "low carbs" they claim may not actually be that low.

DIET & EARLY STAGE KIDNEY DISEASE

Contrary to popular belief, low protein diets are not appropriate for early stage kidney disease in cats. In fact, it may be harmful.

Because it is considered a progressive disease, a cat's decline may be attributed to the disease alone, rather than the high carbohydrate, low-protein diet. There have never been independent and thorough studies done showing the long-term benefits of a low-protein diet in cats that justify this way of feeding (most studies are sponsored by pet food companies to justify their products as compared to equally inappropriate "normal" diets).



FOODS

- My Perfect Pet Low Phosphorus Chicken Formula
- Weruva Paw Lickin' Chicken

SUPPLEMENTS

- AminAvast
- Vetriscience Renal Essentials
- Animal Essentials Senior Support
- Answers Fermented Fish Broth
- Mushroom Matrix MRM Formula
- Animal Essentials Fish Oil Capsules
- Nordic Naturals Omega-3 Pet
- Animal Essentials Plant Enzymes & Probiotics
- Animal Essentials Calcium
- Pet's Friend Eggshell Calcium

CATS NEED PROTEIN

They are designed to make use of protein as a source of energy to function and repair their bodies. Restricting protein can lead to a weakened state that is more vulnerable to disease. Cats eating appropriately high levels of protein may exhibit slightly higher than “normal” BUN levels in their urinalysis. Talk with your veterinarian about this, and if necessary consult with a veterinarian who is more accustomed to analyzing the data of animals fed raw food diets.

LOW PHOSPHORUS

While severe CRD may require low protein, low phosphorus is essential for any pet with CRD. Cooked egg whites can be chopped up and added to a cat’s wet food diet to “dilute” the phosphorus in the meal. This is an easy way to ensure high protein while lowering phosphorus, as is needed for cats with renal failure. You can also talk with your veterinarian about powdered phosphorus binders that can be added to wet food.

ADD FATS

Pets with CRD need moderate to high amounts of fat to provide them with energy they are missing from reduced protein, and benefit from the addition of fish oil for the omega-3 EFAs.

KIDNEY-SPECIFIC SUPPLEMENTS

Some supplements safely benefit the kidneys. Three we recommend for mild to moderate kidney disease are AminAvast, Answers Fermented Fish Broth, and Mushroom Matrix MRM Formula. Consult with your veterinarian if your cat is on medications.

THE CAT WON'T EAT!

One of the side-effects of CRD is loss of appetite, but they must maintain their weight. Pets with CRD need very appetizing foods, and benefit from smaller meals fed more frequently. Low protein foods are usually rejected by cats, so if your cat is required to restrict protein due to advanced disease then you need to get creative by adding stews and toppings. These “picky” cats can definitely become protein deficient if they are eating very little on a protein-restricted diet.

DON'T DISCOUNT THE EFFECTS OF EMOTIONAL STRESS ON KIDNEY ISSUES

Flower Essences, Reiki, and other methods of stress reduction are an important part of treating chronic kidney & bladder issues. They also benefit from treatments like acupressure and acupuncture.

It's important to work with your vet to give appropriate supplements for your pet's specific condition, and to have regular check-ups to monitor their kidney function.