

## Home Made Diet Recipes for Cats

It is my firm belief that a fresh, unprocessed, protein-based diet is the optimum way to feed our domestic cats. They are a carnivorous species, and as such are extremely well adapted to diets high in protein. One of the great advantages of unprocessed foods is that they can slow the digestive process, leading to less metabolic demands. This has been shown to promote weight loss, as well as reduce the tendency to many common diseases such as arthritis, diabetes and cancer.

For a more complete and scientific explanation of the research behind these statements, please ask for my full article on feeding dogs and cats.

In the meantime – please consider either replacing or at least supplementing your cat’s current diet with a home-made alternative. Nutrient Sources MUST include;

### **Protein – (70-90%)**

Animal proteins (meat) are the preferred source unless allergies preclude them.

These include poultry, fish and red meat. Also eggs, organ meat and dairy products can be included here. Avoid processed meats like ham, sausages, bacon etc. Some authors strongly recommend the use of about 10% organ meats in cats – heart, liver, kidney and pancreas are all available.

### **Fats/Oils**

Can provide either in the form of meat fat, or with fish or vegetable oil. Fish oil is also beneficial in managing arthritis, skin and heart disease. Flax (sometimes called linseed) and olive oils are good vegetable oil choices if required.

### **Carbohydrate and Fibre Source (5-10%)**

I strongly advise avoiding use of grain products and other highly digestible carbohydrate sources such as corn and potatoes. This means avoiding the use of rice, pasta, bread and most types of prepared cat food. Providing fibre is less essential in cats than it is in dogs, however cats probably are adapted to gaining some micronutrients from the contents of their herbivore preys’ intestines. A small amount of fresh mashed or pulped vegetables is a good way to provide this – if you have a juicer, the left over pulp in small amounts is perfect. You can drink the juice, and leave the pulp for the cat. Don’t be concerned if your cat doesn’t eat this portion – if they feel they need the nutrients, they will eat it, so keep providing this portion of the diet.

### **Vitamins and Minerals**

Cats have a need for quite high levels of calcium and phosphorus in their diet, and for safety most cat diets should include a vitamin-mineral supplement. A good variety of fresh seasonal vegetables (use lots of colours!) will help provide some of these vitamins and minerals too. Raw bones in the diet can reduce the need for calcium supplementation as well as being very beneficial for a cat’s dental health. Cat’s need taurine, an amino acid, in their diet. Using the above protein recommendations should provide enough, but it is safer to provide a supplementary source to be sure.

## **Paleolithic Diet - (use a fraction of the recipe as per table below)**

*A good basic start to home-cooked meals for cats, this diet has been recommended for use in many of our cancer patients.*

Meat (Cooked or Raw) with some (but not too much) fat	285g
Grains (may use some in working or very active animals)	0g
Mixed Vegetables (Seasonal, Variety, NO potato or Corn)	30g
Fish and/or Olive Oil (less if using fatty meat)	5 tsp
Salt (preferably iodised)	1 tsp
Calcium Carbonate (3 x 600mg tab) <i>or preferably</i> Calcium Citrate (1x600mg tab)	
Human Multi-vitamin Tablet	1 tablet

## **Hypoallergenic Diet - (use a fraction of the recipe as per table below)**

*Indicated for use in some animals with chronic, allergic skin or gastrointestinal disease, and in patients with auto-immune disease.*

Rabbit, Fish, Venison, Quail or Goat Meat	285g
Cooked millet, amaranth or organic potato with skin	30g
Mixed Vegetables (Seasonal, Variety, NO potato or Corn)	30g
Olive Oil	4 tsp
Calcium Carbonate (2 x 600mg tab) <i>or preferably</i> Calcium Citrate (1/2-1x600mg tab)	
Salt (preferably iodised)	1 tsp
Human Multi-vitamin Tablet (look for “hypo-allergenic” one)	1 tablet

To begin – just use the fraction of the recipe above based on your cat’s IDEAL weight. For example a cat whose ideal weight is 5.5kg (this is a big cat!) should have 1/3 of whichever recipe you chose per day. This is the cat’s ENTIRE daily ration – no additional food or treats should be given; if they are the daily ration needs to be reduced. I prefer cats to be fed at least twice a day – more often if possible. In this case split the daily ration evenly between the multiple feeds.

Ideal Weight	2.5kg	3kg	3.5kg	4kg	4.5kg	5kg	5.5kg	6kg
% of ration/day	15%	18%	21%	24%	27%	30%	33%	36%

With each of these diets, it is recommended to add 500mg of taurine PER DAY (*not* per recipe) to your cat’s food. Taurine supplements should be available in health stores.

The volume of food may need to be adjusted to suit your cat’s caloric requirements – up if weight loss is excessive, but more likely down in the case of cats that tend to put on weight easily. In the initial stage of weight loss, begin with 2/3-3/4 of the volume calculated using the above method – again calculating using the cat’s IDEAL weight.

Like any diet – some individuals may require alterations to the make-up or quantity of this diet to optimise their response. Please keep in contact with your veterinarian about your animal’s progress on these home-cooked diets.

Also – think about HOW you feed your cat. The “hunt” can stimulate digestive enzymes, so simulating this using treat balls or paper packets to destroy before they get their food can improve not only digestion but mental stimulation as well.