

Care of Cats with Sensitive Stomachs

Proper nutrition is important for all cats. Most gastro-intestinal problems develop from an unsuitable diet. To alleviate symptoms:

- Eliminate all common intolerances from the diet: grains (corn, rice, wheat and their derivatives)
- Eliminate common allergens (fish, beef, etc.) – stick with poultry and/or rabbit

For more information, please visit www.felineoutreach.org.



Feline Outreach Inc. is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of the care of companion animals, specifically cats.

The information contained is for general informational purposes only, and is no substitute for your own research or the advice of a veterinarian.

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Tummy Trouble



Treatment of
feline gastro-
intestinal disorders





Diet

Cats are obligate carnivores. They have no nutritional need for carbohydrates. Many gastro-intestinal problems are exacerbated by inappropriate items in the diet. The most common triggers are grains (corn, rice, wheat) and derivatives thereof (gluten, flour, starch, etc.) Vegetables and fruit can also be problematic.

Of meat sources, more natural proteins are less likely to cause issues. Poultry and rabbit are good options. Beef, fish, pork, and lamb are more likely to cause allergic reactions, as they're not part of a cat's natural diet.

When a canned diet fails, a limited-ingredient raw diet of poultry or rabbit can often clear up problems almost immediately. Look for a nutritionally complete frozen raw diet, complete with vitamins and minerals. If making your own is an option, use a reputable recipe such as those found on catinfo.org or catnutrition.org.

Supplements and Medication

Cobalamin (vitamin B12) injections have been shown to be very effective at treating gastro-intestinal disorders. Injectable cobalamin is only available by prescription, but often the injections are inexpensive and can be given at home. Often they're needed weekly, and the timing may be decreased over time. Injectable supplementation is much more effective than oral, as it bypasses the inflamed gastro-intestinal tract and is absorbed in its entirety.

Oral folate (folic acid) supplementation can also be useful. Folate is generally available over-the-counter and is inexpensive.

Some find probiotics and omega fatty acids helpful.

Steroids

Steroids and other immune-suppressing drugs can also relieve symptoms, but may also have undesirable side effects. If such drugs are necessary, cyclosporine and budesonide may result in the fewest systematic side effects.

Finally

The majority of gastro-intestinal problems clear up quickly once a proper diet is established. The longer the cat consumes the problem foods, the longer it may take to alleviate the symptoms. High fiber and hypo-allergenic diets that contain grains and steroids may only delay the inevitable and create larger problems later.

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