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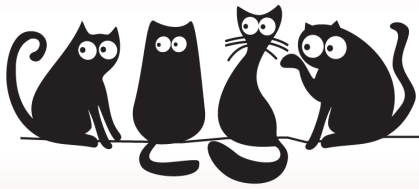
Raw Food Diet for Cats:

We know from human nutrition and research studies that the less processed our foods are, the healthier they are for us. This is why we believe the same is true for our feline friends. Cats are obligate carnivores and as such need animal-based proteins to thrive. They cannot get enough nutritional support from plant-based proteins. Because, unlike humans and dogs, they lack specific enzymes that break down plant-based proteins into amino acids to have them metabolically available.

The key nutrients a cat gets from meat include taurine, arachidonic acid, vitamin A and vitamin B12. These nutrients can't be sufficiently obtained from plant-based foods. Without a steady supply of these nutrients, cats can suffer from liver and heart problems, not to mention skin irritation and hearing loss.

Commercial pet foods are highly processed, and most are too high in carbohydrates for cats, leading to all kinds of health problems. Dry food can be the source of many of the degenerative diseases we see in cats, ranging from allergies to intestinal problems to diabetes and urinary tract issues. While a quality grain-free canned diet may be a better choice, the meat in those diets must be cooked. Cooking degrades the nutrients, leading to loss of enzymes, vitamins, and minerals. To make up for this, pet food manufacturers must add in supplements to make up for these losses. Supplementation is not always exact, and depending on the manufacturer, may be done with synthetic rather than natural supplements, which may not be as easily absorbed by cats' bodies as the real thing.





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There are numerous Facebook groups that advocate for raw feeding your cat. Whilst the raw food community is proposing this feeding method, there is a lack of scientific evidence that supports the claim that it is healthier.

Here are the top 7 questions when it comes to feeding your cat raw food:

1. Is it dangerous to feed raw meat because it contains bacteria?

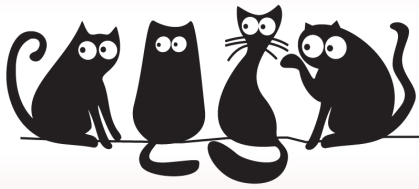
Cats have a highly acidic digestive tract that is much shorter than humans. Food passes through in a much shorter time, bacteria don't have enough time to get into their system. It makes them more resistant to food born illnesses than humans. The risk to a healthy young cat is minimal. The emphasis on safe handling that you'll hear from most proponents of raw feeding is for the humans in the household, not for the cat.

But be aware: This only applies to healthy cats. Older cats, cats with an immune compromised system or kittens are usually not good candidates for raw feeding.

2. Is it dangerous to feed raw meat because it may contain toxins or parasites?

Make sure you purchase your raw meat or your raw diet from a reputable source. Any human grade meat you purchase from a grocery store should be free of contaminations, toxins, or parasites. There is a minimal risk that your raw diet is contaminated, but there is no 100% guarantee that commercially prepared foods are free of any contamination.





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3. Is raw feeding complicated?

It is in your hands to make it as complicated or easy as you want!

Some cat owners want to make their own raw foods, and there are many reputable companies that offer frozen raw food that is already nutritionally balanced. It really comes down to your level of comfort, and your budget.

4. Are raw diets complete and balanced?

That depends on the diet you choose to feed.

There are many companies out there that promote a “premix” or “completer” to a handful of ground meat. Most of these diets I come across are NOT balanced and do NOT include proper levels of vitamins and minerals. Especially not when you are feeding your cat this one recipe daily.

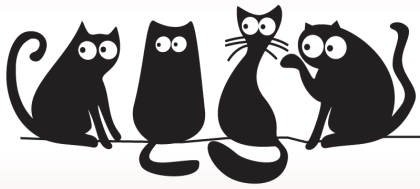
5. Do I need to rotate multiple foods or formulations?

That depends on the diet you choose to feed, and your cat.

Many cat owners rotate multiple foods or formulations when feeding their cat. They believe their cats wants/needs variation AND they want to balance the risk of lacking one or more nutrients in a particular diet.

Fact is, cats in the wild do not hunt for a mouse today, and a squirrel tomorrow. Cats require nutrients, not different flavors. And many cats like routine, and it helps to avoid an upset tummy.





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Rotating foods to avoid nutritional imbalance is a risky game. All commercially available cat foods your feed should have the label “complete and balanced according to AAFCO”. And when you formulate a homemade diet make sure you work with a nutritionist that has a formulation software and can provide more information that just protein and fat content. (See above – key nutrients for cats!)

6. Is raw food healthier for my cat?

According to raw food advocates there are numerous benefits from feeding a raw diet to your cat. Improved digestion, reduced stool odor and volume, increased energy, ability to maintain ideal weight, better dental health, and better urinary tract health.

Unfortunately, until today there is no scientific evidence to back those claims.

7. Do cats need dry food to keep their teeth clean?

NO! Cats don’t chew. Any scraping action that is behind this theory is a myth. Larger kibbles that are promoted for dental health are chewed in whole. Which leads in many cases to GI upsets or vomiting.

