



60 Commerce St. Williston, VT  
(802)-860-2287  
[www.affectionatelycats.com](http://www.affectionatelycats.com)

## A DRY-FOOD DIET PUTS YOUR CAT AT RISK

In the wild, cats eat a high-protein, high-moisture, meat-based diet, with only 3-5% of their daily caloric intake coming from carbohydrates. The average dry food is 35-50% carbohydrates, while a high quality canned food is 3-5%. As animals that evolved in the desert, cats do not have a strong thirst drive and are designed to obtain most of their water from their diet. A natural diet of rodents and birds is approximately 75% water. Dry food is only 7-10% water. Canned food is approximately 78% water.

**Dry foods have been shown to contribute to many potentially life-threatening health problems in cats, such as:**

**Diabetes:** Cats do not metabolize carbohydrates well; those sugars that are not packed into fat linger in the bloodstream and raise blood sugar levels. Many diabetic cats have been successfully weaned off insulin when transitioned to a low-carbohydrate, 100% canned food diet.

**Obesity:** This serious, and unfortunately common, health problem has historically been treated with low-fat, high-carbohydrate "light" diets. Most cats will lose weight when fed high-quality canned food.

**Kidney Disease:** Cats being fed primarily dry food are chronically dehydrated. Chronic dehydration plays a large role in feline kidney failure.

**Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease (FLUTD):** Bladder and kidney stones can be life-threatening in cats. Dehydrated cats produce highly concentrated urine, which in turn increases the chance of forming stones. A diet of canned food will keep the proper amount of water flowing through the urinary tract system.

**Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD):** There are an impressive number of anecdotal reports of cats with IBD that exhibited dramatic improvement when all dry food was removed from their diet.

**Dental Disease:** The long-standing myth that feeding dry food will keep your cat's teeth clean is overrated and overstated. For good oral health, we recommend daily tooth brushing and professional cleanings once or twice a year.

*It is important that your cat eat every day to reduce the risk of dangerous complications such as hepatic lipidosis (fatty liver disease).*



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## TRANSITIONING CATS TO CANNED FOOD

There are generally two categories of cats: those who will readily eat canned food and those who won't. Cats that have never been offered canned food sometimes do not recognize it as food, and it may take weeks or months to transition completely. Be patient; the goal is to make the transition as easy as possible for your cat.

If your cat has been free-fed, establish a schedule of 3 feedings per day. Leave the food down for 20 minutes, and then remove the uneaten portion. Once your cat is on a schedule, you will notice your cat is more enthusiastic about food during mealtimes and will be more inclined to try something new.

If your cat has already been eating some canned food, start increasing the amount of canned food while gradually decreasing the dry.

Don't panic if your cat refuses to touch the canned food. Simply remove the uneaten food and offer another meal at the next mealtime. If your cat hasn't eaten anything in 18 hours, give him  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of his usual food, and try again at the next meal. *It is important that your cat eat every day to reduce the risk of dangerous complications such as hepatic lipidosis (fatty liver disease).*

### Tips:

- Exercise your cat with an interactive toy before feeding to stimulate his appetite.
- Mix a small amount of tuna, meat-based baby food, chicken, parmesan cheese, FortiFlora, or other fragrant favorite treat into the food.
- Crush up some dry food and sprinkle it on top of the canned food. Your cat may pick around the canned food but will get used to the smell and texture.
- Try a different flavor or brand to find something your cat likes. Even a low-quality canned food is better than dry food, and you can focus on transitioning your cat to a higher-quality food once he's first used to eating canned food.

We recommend the following brands for their excellent nutritional quality: Evo, Wellness/CORE, Merrick, Weruva/BFF



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## CANNED FOODS WE RECOMMEND

Cats should be fed high-water, low-carbohydrate canned food with most of their daily calories coming from protein (see below). This most closely mimics their natural diet of small birds and rodents.

<u>Source</u>	<u>Daily Calories</u>
Protein (animal-based)	50%
Fat	40%
Carbohydrates	Less than 10%

We recommend the following brands for their excellent nutritional quality:

**Evo**

**Merrick**

**Wellness/Wellness Core**

**Weruva/B.F.F.** \*We do not recommend these brands for kittens. They do not have a kitten formula. These brands are also low calorie due to their high moisture content.\*

**Wild Kitty (homemade cat food kits)**



For more information, visit:

<http://www.catinfo.org/>