

# The benefits of wet food in a cat's diet



**Wet food can play an important role in improving our cat's health, contributing to fewer veterinary visits over the pet's life.**

## Dry diet problem

Kibble-based diets have gained in popularity because of their convenience, practicality and cost. They allow for free-feeding and do not spoil in the bowl for a long time. There are, however, drawbacks. Dry food may result in overfeeding, as it is condensed. Also, contrary to naturally obtained food, kibble has at most 10% of moisture. Cats do not biologically compensate for the absence of water by simply drinking more. Since they originate from arid zones, their first natural response to low moisture foods is to concentrate their urine rather than drink more and this, in time, may lead to health problems.

## More water, better urinary health

The water requirement of an average cat is 250 ml per day (one cup!). Cats usually drink little and cat owners have difficulties in encouraging them to drink enough. Feeding wet food helps to sneak in some water. Up to 75% of a cat's water requirement can be satisfied by food alone.

Wet food contains 60-80% of moisture resulting in diluted urine, which in turn prevents problems in the urinary system, such as urolithiasis. Although our pets drink noticeably less, their total daily water intake is substantially improved.

## Cats' favourite

Wet food is reported to be more palatable than the dry foods. That is probably because it is richer in protein and fat, which naturally pleases the cat's taste buds. Additionally, wet food is usually more aromatic and comes in a variety of textures.

## Healthy body weight

Since water has no calories, wet food has lower energy density on an 'as is' basis than dry food. Consequently, it may reduce total calories consumed, help with weight loss or prevent the risk of obesity in cats. Moreover, the cost per calorie and the perishable nature of wet food may reduce owners' tendency to overfeed their pets.

## Practical dietary consideration

With all this in mind, it is still good to expose our pets from youth to various textures, both dry and wet, in order to minimise the risk of neophobia (the avoidance of unfamiliar food types) in case health issues and vet's recommendations require a major dietary change. ♦



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