

# FELINE VETERINARIAN BOOTCAMP FOR NEW GRADUATES: Changing Your Cat's Food



Your veterinarian may recommend a diet change as treatment for your cat's medical needs. Some reasons a diet change may be needed include:

- Managing a specific disease (e.g., diabetes or kidney disease).
- Weight loss.
- Tempting an inappetent cat to eat.
- Improving recovery from surgery or illness.
- Improving your cat's diet based on age and unique needs.

## How to Change Your Cat's Food

Some cats develop a strong preference for certain foods, so it is important when switching foods, that it is done slowly and appropriately. While some cats may be okay with a gradual mixing of new food to old food, some are not. For this reason, we recommend **DO NOT MIX FOODS.**

- The change should be gradual over a 7 to 10-day period (sometimes longer: up to 3 months).
- Begin by offering the new food in a separate dish a few inches away from the norm, while still offering the old food in the normal bowls in their regular spots.
- If your cat accepts the new diet, you will gradually increase the amount of the new food while decreasing the amount of the old food over several days.
- If your cat is reluctant to eat the new diet, this process will take longer. Do not give up. Any interest like sniffing or walking up to it is a positive sign and will eventually lead to tasting and acceptance.
- If the new diet is canned and they still are reluctant to take it, heating this food up for a few seconds may enhance the diet's palatability.
- If done gradually and according to your cat's signals, most cats accept the new diet in their own time. Be patient.