



## FEEDING YOUR CATS

### Cat's Natural Food:

In the wild, cats eat mice and birds so a cat's natural diet is raw small animals, spaced out as several small meals over a day and with energy expended during the hunting. It's important to bear in mind that cats eat just about all of their prey, including muscle, bone, skin and innards. Fish is not a natural diet for cats since the cat evolved from the Desert Wild Cat (no fish in the desert!). An artificial diet for cats should try to mimic the calories, vitamins and minerals contained in meals of raw small animals in the same proportions.

### General Recommendations:

It's not really practical to breed mice to feed our cats (though snake owners do!) so we need to buy food to create the correct balance. All reputable food companies try to create foods that are complete and balanced. As a general rule, the only prepared foods (tins, sachets or dry food) that aren't balanced are cheap 'no-name' brands or expensive gourmet brands (and even some of each of these foods are complete and balanced). Always check the label for the words 'Complete and Balanced' or 'AAFCO approved'. **Raw meat alone is not a balanced diet** (since it doesn't contain skin, bones, innards) and pet meats have their own specific problems. There is no regulation of the pet fresh meat industry in Australia and consequently, these foods almost inevitably have high levels of preservatives that are not allowed in meat for human consumption. **The sulphite preservatives** in these meats break down vitamin B1 (thiamine) and thiamine deficiency **causes bleeding in the brain**. This is a well-documented problem in dogs and cats.

**\*\*\* DON'T FEED PET MEATS \*\*\***

You can supplement a diet of mainly tinned and dry food with some meat for human consumption and **raw chicken wings (not cooked!)** provide good **exercise for the teeth and gums**. We generally recommend against feeding just tinned food as there is usually no exercise for teeth or just dry food as these are high in calories and carbohydrates (not many carbohydrates in raw mouse or bird!). There may be specific conditions that we do recommend just tinned food or just dry food.

### Kittens:

Kittens requirements follow the same general guidelines as above but kittens grow healthier when they have **higher calories** and **higher protein**. Feeding a mix of tinned and dry foods designed specifically for kittens meets these needs....and teach them that raw chicken wings are real food while they are still young.

Feel free to ask us if you have any further questions.