

## TRANSITIONING YOUR PET TO A NEW FOOD

### Snelgrove Veterinary Services

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Transitioning your pet to a new food is important to be sure that we do not cause any dietary indiscretions, such as vomiting and diarrhea, as well as, being sure your pet will like their new food. Many times, if you just place a new food down, especially with cats, they may just turn their nose up at it. It is recommended to just put a couple of kibbles into their food dish with their old food for the first few days to see if they eat it or pick around it. If this goes well then you can start transitioning them to the new food.

*A couple of kibbles for the first few days*

Transitioning to a new food is as simple as alternating out a 1/4 of your pets' total meal every 2-3 days until you are completely over to the new food.



Be sure to follow the feeding guidelines provided to you and take account of ALL treats given when calculating daily calories.

#### *Cats:*

Mixing cat food brands or formulas should take time. Try to ensure your cat enjoys their eating experience as much as possible. Remember to be patient. For finicky, older cats with health conditions, the transition time could take 10 days or slightly longer.

- Provide privacy and a quiet eating area away from loud noises and other cats.
- Hand-feed your cat, at least initially if necessary. The person offering the cat food should have a good relationship with the cat.
- Ensure you store all of your cat foods appropriately to maintain the quality and freshness of the cat food.

Unless instructed by your veterinarian, wet cat food is often best as a compliment to your pet's dry food routine. If your cat is new to the concept of canned food, there are some ways you can help introduce it into their diet.

- If moist or canned cat food has been refrigerated, warm to body temperature before feeding. Stir thoroughly to distribute "hot spots" that occur during microwave warming. If it's too warm to touch, it's too warm to feed.
- For canned cat food, offer it on a flat dish or saucer so your cat's whiskers don't brush against the side of the dish. It may help to initially place a small amount of warm moist cat food near the edge of the dish so your cat can lick it easily.

Note: In some cases, such as acute gastrointestinal issues, your veterinarian may not recommend a transition and want you to immediately start feeding the new cat food.