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RIVERSIDE CAT
HOSPITAL



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Making Sense Out Of Pet Food Labels

In our last newsletter, we introduced the topic of feline nutrition, and discussed how best to decide what type of food, and how much food, to feed your cat. So, you think, “I’ll just read the labels on the pet food to figure out which is best to feed my cat.” Unfortunately, it may not be as simple as that. Let’s take a look at what’s included on

pet food labels...

The production and packaging of pet foods is regulated by the FDA, which requires the following to be listed on pet food packages:

- Guaranteed analysis
- Nutritional adequacy statement
- Ingredients list
- Feeding guidelines
- Manufacturer’s name and address

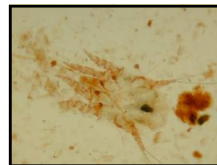
Guaranteed analysis

This reports tells us how much protein, fat, fiber, and moisture are in the food. We can also get a measure of the carbohydrate content by adding up all of the components and subtracting that total from 100. Keep in mind that this analysis is reported on an “as fed” basis. In order to compare two different foods, espe-

Newsletter Trivia Contest

Congratulations to Locita, the winner of our first newsletter trivia contest! Her owner, Jesse Sadowsky, was one of several people to correctly identify our mystery picture as an ear mite.

Ear mites are parasites that invade the outer ear canal, and cause intense itchiness. Outdoor cats and cats in shelters are most frequently affected. Topical Revolution once monthly is effective prevention against ear mites for cats that may be exposed.



Locita will be taking home a gift basket packed with treats, toys, and other goodies. Thanks to all who submitted answers!

To submit your answer, e-mail us at the.cat.vet@gmail.com, call us, or send us a postcard with your answer. If more than one correct response is received, the winner will be chosen randomly.

This month’s question:

How many adult teeth does a cat have?



For more information, please turn to page 2 ➤



Locita, our winner

Reliable resources for pet food information:

- The FDA: This is the agency responsible for regulating the manufacture of pet foods. Their website, www.fda.gov, contains valuable information about pet foods.
- Your veterinarian can help you to interpret pet food labels and help you select the right food for your cat
- www.VeterinaryPartner.com: This site has several good articles on how pet food is made, and how to read the labels.
- The pet food manufacturer can often provide extra information on their products.

Pet Food Labels, cont.

cially foods with radically different moisture levels, like canned and dry, the measurements must be converted to a “dry matter” basis. It is not difficult to make these calculations—there is a good article at VeterinaryPartner.com that discusses how to make the conversion.

Nutritional adequacy statement

This statement will tell us whether the food is simply formulated to meet the animal’s nutritional needs, or whether its nutritional adequacy has actually been evaluated in feeding trials.

Ingredients

This information is a listing of the ingredients included in the food. The list is ordered according to descending weight. This is important because ingredients that

contain more water, such as chicken, are usually heavier. Just because chicken, for example, is listed as the first ingredient, it does not necessarily follow that the food contains more chicken than other ingredients.



Feeding guidelines

Pet food packaging must include a guideline for how much to feed your cat. However, these are rough guidelines only, as nutritional requirements vary widely between individuals. Foods labeled as “reduced calorie” do not necessarily have to be “lite”, they need

only have fewer calories than another product. Your veterinarian can help to calculate how many calories your cat should be eating. Unfortunately, most foods are not labeled with calorie information. To get this information, you must contact the manufacturer. By law, the manufacturer’s name and address must be provided on the package. Many manufacturers also include a toll-free telephone number for consumers, or even a web address.

Trying to make sense out of pet food labels can be confusing, but there are good resources to help out. With a little time and consideration, most of us can be confident that we have made a good decision about our pets’ food.



Newsletter Trivia Contest, cont.

In the spirit of February being National Pet Dental Health Month, the winner of this month’s Newsletter Trivia will win a dental care package for their cat, including a cat toothbrush and toothpaste package, a 4lb bag of Hill’s Prescription Diet t/d dental care food,

and a 30 count package of CET feline chew treats.

Entries may be submitted by e-mail, phone, fax, or snail mail.



Be sure to include your name and phone number along with your answer! Please see our contact information on the last page of this newsletter. Entries must be received by March 1st, 2009.

Ask Izzy

Dear Izzy,

How often should I bathe my cat?

Signed Mrs. I.M. Klene

Dear Mrs. Klene,

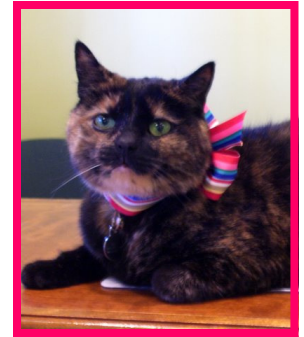
I am sure that all of my fellow felines reading this column will be happy to hear that I don't recommend bathing your cat at all! Most of us kitties are very fastidious about our personal

hygiene, and our barbed tongues are very efficient for grooming. Besides, most of us don't really enjoy baths anyway (despite rumors I've heard that there are some cats who like to get into the shower with their people!)

OK, there may be the occasional long-haired cat that just can't handle grooming all by himself, or the lazy cat that

doesn't bother to groom properly. These few poor kitties may need your help. But the majority of us would greatly prefer to handle our grooming needs by ourselves. Save yourself the trouble and let us do the bathing!

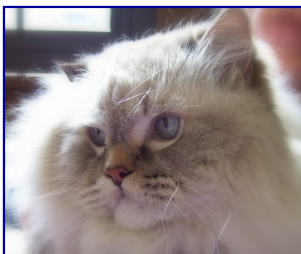
Signed, Izzy



Izzy, our Resident Cat, likes to help out around the clinic by answering questions from our patients and their families. If you have a question for Izzy, you can send it to her via mail, or e-mail from our website, www.RiversideCatHospital.com, and click on the *contact us* link.

In Memoriam

In memory of those kitties who have left us in the past 3 months— They give so much and demand so little in return.



Belle C.
Fluffy C.
Hershey M.
Lucy B.
Maggie H.
Sugar K.
Dian K.

Fritz O.

Hear our humble prayer,
O God,
for our friends, the animals,
especially for those who are suffering;
for any that are lost or deserted
or frightened or hungry.

We entreat for them all
Thy mercy and pity,
and for those who deal with them,
we ask a heart of compassion
and gentle hands and kindly words.

Make us, ourselves,
to be true friends to animals
and so to share
the blessings
of the merciful.

Albert Schweitzer

Employee Pet Spotlight

Mary Murphy lives with hubby, Jim and four cats who love to beg their humans for tuna treats. The two orange are sister and brother, Garbonzo and Cashew. The tortoiseshell and grey/white are sisters, Tenana and Chena.



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CARING FOR YOUR CATS
AS MUCH AS YOU DO.

Want to receive this newsletter electronically? Send your email address to us at the.cat.vet@gmail.com, give us a call, or visit our website at www.RiversideCatHospital.com to sign up!



Riverside Cat Hospital was opened in 2006 by Dr. Kerry Lewis. She is a 1999 graduate of Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine, and lives in East Lansing with her husband, Andrew, and 3 children. They have 3 cats.

Our mission is to provide compassionate care to our feline friends, helping them to live longer, happier lives. We are cat people too! We understand the special bond that you have with your cats.

If you have friends or family with cats who might benefit from a more personalized, compassionate feline veterinary experience, please let them know about us! We are happy to provide a tour of our clinic anytime.

The Last Word...

As I sit here writing this, we are in the midst of a blizzard, so it seems a little strange to be working on the spring newsletter. But, it will be February by the time you read this, so spring can't be far ahead!

Thanks to all of you who submitted guesses for our newsletter trivia contest last time around—it was lots of fun! I hope we get even more people taking part this time around. We hope you have fun with it, and we plan to make it a regular part of our newsletter.



In case you haven't seen it, we have a photo album of our patients at our website—check out the “other features” tab. We've tried to include as many of our patients as possible. Feel free to send us your favorite photos (e-mail the.cat.vet@gmail.com) and we'll be sure that they get included.



Until next time,

Dr. Kerry Lewis

Don't forget about Wellness Packages for your cat! These great, money-saving packages cover your pet for 1 year, and include 2 wellness exam visits, fecal testing, all necessary vaccines, and unlimited nail trims for the entire year. Kittens also receive feline leukemia testing and Revolution, and senior kitties receive screening blood work and blood pressure testing. As an added bonus, all kitties with wellness packages will also receive 10% off of dental services for the year! Give us a call for more information!