

Nutritional support as an adjunct to medical treatment of the hyperthyroid cat

Nutritional assessment is an important aspect of optimal patient care, since optimal nutrition can enhance quality of life and life expectancy. This is reflected in WSAVA's global initiative to include nutritional assessment as the 5th vital sign in the standard physical examination of each pet^x.

For cats diagnosed and medically treated for hyperthyroidism it is important to include nutritional assessment in each physical examination during routine monitoring of the cat. Based on the outcome of the nutritional assessment – including assessment of the cat's age, body condition score, muscle condition score and presence of concurrent clinical conditions as chronic kidney disease, reduced cardiac function, hypertension, diabetes and gastrointestinal disease – a recommendation for optimal nutritional support should be made for each individual cat.

Dechra has expertise in both endocrinology and nutrition and is unique in not only providing the anti-thyroid drug Felimazole, but also providing the SPECIFIC™ diet range for optimal support of hyperthyroid cats.

The SPECIFIC range provides diets for the nutritional support as an adjunct to medical treatment of hyperthyroid cats. Different dietary options are available depending on the cats condition, including diets for cats suffering from kidney disease, concurrent diabetes mellitus, concurrent digestive issues and to support underweight cats.

The chart 'SPECIFIC' diets for nutritional support of hyperthyroid cats' recommends the most appropriate SPECIFIC diet for each case, depending on body condition and concurrent complications, available to download from www.dechra.com/endocrinology











Some of the complications associated with endocrine disease may benefit from supportive measures such as nutritional management. Optimal nutrition can enhance quality of life and life expectancy.

SPECIFIC diets for nutritional support as adjunct to medical treatment of hyperthyroid cats



Condition of the cat	Recommended SPECIFIC diet	Rationale
Underweight Muscle wasting	FXW Adult F/C-IN-W Intensive Support 	For more severe cases of underweight cats with muscle loss SPECIFIC F/C-IN-W Intensive Support can be used: The high levels of energy , fat, protein and other essential nutrients help support recovery, restore muscle mass and gain weight. With added beta-glucans, increased levels of omega-3 fatty acids , zinc and arginine to support the immune status. For less severe cases SPECIFIC FXW Adult and FED-DM/FEW-DM Endocrine Support are high-protein diets that will help restore reduced muscle mass
Concurrent chronic kidney disease	FKD/ FKW Kidney Support 	The restricted content of phosphorus is essential to support maintenance of renal function in kidney patients. The reduced level of protein helps to maintain physiological blood levels of urea in cats with renal failure. The unique high level of omega-3 fatty acids from fish oil can furthermore help to support the kidney function in cats with kidney insufficiency.
Concurrent cardiac failure and/ or hypertension	FDK/ FKW Kidney Support 	The reduced sodium level helps to break the vicious cycle of water retention. The high levels of omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA can support maintenance of muscle mass, appetite and normal blood pressure. Added L-carnitine and taurine for support of cardiac function.
Concurrent diabetes mellitus	FED-DM FEW-DM Endocrine Support 	Low levels of carbohydrate and carbohydrates from slow complex carbohydrate sources, to regulate blood glucose levels in cats with Diabetes mellitus. Increased levels of crude fibre retard the digestion of carbohydrates for improved glycemic control. High levels of omega-3 fatty acids and beta-glucans to support the immune response and help to increase insulin sensitivity. In the dry diet, omega-3 fatty acids additionally help, together with the reduced fat level, to maintain normal blood lipid levels and thereby support cats with pancreatitis; increased levels of antioxidants (Vitamin A, E, fruit extracts) can help to neutralise free radicals, which play a pivotal role in the pathogenesis of diabetes mellitus.
Concurrent gastrointestinal problems (vomiting, diarrhoea)	FID/ FIW Digestive Support 	A highly digestible diet with increased levels of minerals, fat soluble vitamins and electrolytes to compensate for increased losses during diarrhoea and vomiting. With beta-glucans, natural egg-immunoglobulins (only in FID) and manno-oligosaccharides to support the intestinal immune response. It is recommended to divide the daily ration into several meals per day.
Ideal body condition, age > 8 years	FGD/ FGW Senior 	A nutritional aid for support of health in the senior cat. The controlled content of protein and moderately reduced content of phosphorus and sodium reduce the workload of the kidneys and support renal function in senior cats. With increased levels of taurine and L-carnitine to support cardiac function.

Optimal nutritional management of the individual pet should be based on nutritional assessment, taking into account the pet's age, body condition score, muscle condition score and presence of concurrent clinical conditions. It is recommended that the nutritional assessment is repeated on a regular basis and that dietary recommendations are adapted accordingly, if necessary.