



Kidney Disease in Cats - Renal Failure



Chronic kidney disease is one of the main causes of death in cats and is often caused by the food we feed. Lets take a trip back to the past. Before the introduction of commercial pet food cats were fed scrap meat, liver, heart and bones. In this time it was virtually unheard of for cats to die from kidney disease or kidney failure. With the introduction of commercial pet foods kidney disease is now one of the biggest killers of all cat breeds. The disease doesn't target age, breed or sex. It targets those on commercial food, both wet and dry.

Why does commercial food cause kidney failure?

Cats have a very different digestive system to both humans and dogs. They survive and require larger percentages of meat than dogs. They require their meat to be very fresh, whereas most dogs are happy to eat 10 day old meat. Why is this the case? Cats have evolved to survive in some of the most extreme conditions. Similar to rabbits they can survive in arid and extremely dry regions with very little water and indeed thrive. Unlike dogs, in the same arid environment, would suffer exhaustion and dehydration in a short time and with lack of available water would perish.

Cats, like rabbits have the ability to absorb water from their food. In fact cats can absorb 80% of their water needs from fresh meat. This is why those that feed their cats a natural diet will seldom see their cats drink from their water bowls. This is very normal. Those that feed commercial diets will need to top their cats water bowls up regularly. This is not normal. So what does this mean and how does the food we feed cause kidney failure? The cats system has evolved to absorb a large portion of its water via its food. When we feed processed commercial food, dry and wet our cats requirement for water increases and they must get it from another source. They must begin to drink larger portions than what they are used to drinking. The kidney's are forced to work twice as hard as they were naturally evolved to work. Even with the uptake of extra water, cats are still chronically dehydrated. By doing this eventually the kidney's will become tired and diseased at an unusually young age. Commonly seen from ages 7 and up.

Research has also linked dry cat food with urinary problems. Veterinarian and Pet Nutritionist Lisa Pierson says: 'Chronic kidney disease is one of the main causes of death in cats and is often caused because they are chronically dehydrated by just eating dried food. Even if they drink water, often it is not enough to ensure optimum urinary health.'

Not convinced? Then consider that while cat and dog food sales have soared by 85 per cent over the past decade, research by the Pet Food Manufacturers

Association shows that one in three household pets is now overweight - and chronic conditions in our pets, such as diabetes, kidney and liver disease, heart disease and dental problems (all related to diet) are increasing at the same rate. The link is very evident.

So why does our vet recommend commercial food for our cat, even when they have kidney disease?

Research into pet food is carried out by the pet food companies and more surprisingly, the training of vets at many universities is also funded by pet food manufacturers. Universities in Australia and other western countries are sponsored and trained by leading Vet brand pet food.

Crucially, lectures on nutrition at a number of vet schools, and for vet nurses, are also often paid for and even taught by these huge corporations, giving them the ideal platform to promote their products, rather than pet health.

One could argue that given this information, it's hardly in vets' interests to promote a more natural diet for pets.

Treatment for Kidney Disease

Treatment for cats with kidney disease comprises of diuretics and a range of drugs. Because many cats are diagnosed with kidney disease at a young age they will need to be on these medications for the rest of their lives. Unfortunately when on these medications I often see the secondary illness caused by being on medications long term. Most often liver failure, from long term drug use. I have also seen patients die from liver failure caused from the drugs used for kidney disease. It is a terrible cycle and once you are on it, it very often ends poorly for the cat.

Alternative treatment is very beneficial and under a trained naturopath can give your cat great results. Homoeopathic treatment and Chinese medicine is also very beneficial.

What you can do at home to help. Supplement your cat with

- Vitamin A
- Vitamin C
- Bioflavonoids
- Vitamin B-complex, especially B6
- Vitamin E

To make it easy, use DigestaVite plus as this will provide you with Vitamins A, C, all your B vitamins and Vitamin E. In higher dosages DigestaVite Plus will also protect your cats liver when on on kidney failure medication.

How do we prevent our cats from getting kidney disease?

Prevention is simple! No medicine is required. Purely feeding a natural diet of raw meat, organ, meat, small bones and a supplement like DigestaVite Plus to provide the vegetable needs and extra nutrition is all that is required to prevent your cat dying from Kidney Disease. Kidney disease is a painful and difficult disease to treat. Once your cat has it is can't be cured of it. Saying this kidney disease is the easiest disease to prevent. It all comes down to what you feed. A natural diet means no kidney disease for your cat.