

# COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS IN CAT BREEDING

## MYTH:

There is no need to change foods, whether my cat is pregnant or not, or during lactation.

## TRUTH:

The nutritional requirements for pregnant or lactating cats are very different than for non-reproducing or spayed/neutered adult cats. Many adult cats are fed maintenance diets, which may not offer the right balance of nutrients and energy needed during reproduction.

Whenever breeding is planned, the queen should be gradually transitioned over 5-7 days to an appropriate diet such as Royal Canin Queen. This diet is designed to support both a healthy pregnancy and lactation and should be fed from the first day of estrus (heat) until the kittens are weaned. The amount fed per day should gradually increase throughout gestation to approximately 50% more kcal/day than prior to breeding.

After parturition (queening, birth of kittens), most queens should be fed free-choice (all they can eat) so that they can maintain their own healthy body condition while producing large quantities of milk. The kittens can be offered solid food



starting at 3 to 4 weeks of age. An appropriate diet for kittens is Royal Canin Mother & Babycat. The special rehydratable (moistened) kibbles of this diet are perfect for weaning.

For convenience, the queen can also be transitioned from Queen to the Mother & Babycat diet at the same time. When the queen is ready to stop nursing the litter, generally when the kittens are between 5 and 7 weeks of age, she should be separated temporarily from her litter and offered less food. The kittens can continue eating Babycat while the queen can be transitioned over 5-7 days back to her original diet.



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