



HOW TO CONVERT A CAT TO RAW FOOD

BY MADELEINE INNOCENT

cover image - Merlin trying to scoop out the tiniest morsel of raw meat left after his tame human had minced up the week's meaty meals. I use mince because of the competition - if they eat it fast it is more likely to stay down!

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INTRODUCTION

Changing anyone's diet is a pretty major undertaking. Or can be. Imagine bringing up your kids on fast food, then suddenly realising the error of your ways. Don't imagine for a moment, converting them would be easy.

Some cats adapt really, really easily, almost with a thankful air of "what took you so long?" attitude. Others are more stubborn. This report is for the more stubborn ones:)

This information is not about what to feed your cat. I have already covered that extensively in my work, **Naturally Healthy Cats**. The information here is to help you through the process of changing your cat's diet.

Changing your cat's diet to a healthy, quality, raw one can have an immediate effect on their health. Typically within a week or two, if not sooner, people report seeing a marked change for the better in behavioural issues, quality of the coat, more playful, and so on.

So getting this right is incredibly important for your cat's overall health.

The Challenges - You!

BUT FIRST, YOU have to be convinced this is the right thing to do.

If you aren't, you won't stick it out. And your cat will pick up on your lack of certainty and figure there is something wrong, so won't cooperate.

In my experience, that's one of the BIGGEST hurdle in the whole process - YOU!

You don't have to be 100% on board. But you do need to be aware of the damaging effects of commercial cat food and you do need to want to do the best for your cat.

This is the same as the current western diets being damaging to our own health. A healthy diet for us is also one of the main tenets of returning and maintaining our own good health.

So this report is not for those who opt for the easy path of simply opening a packet or can.

This is for those who are open to changing their own diets for better health. Who understand and appreciate that diet is one of the main keys to good and lasting health.

To convince your cat, you need to put your money where your mouth is:) Cats pick up on the lack of authenticity really easily, as do all animals.

Over the years of helping people take this challenge, I have found that the following process is the most helpful. Some people and cats move faster than others, so you can happily skip steps. This is the long version, just to make sure nothing is left out.

The Challenges - Your Cat

There is also a second reason cats, and others, can be resistant to a healthy diet.

I believe that the high toxicity that is so prevalent today, in our environment, but especially in the veterinary care and the commercial cat food, dulls our cats instincts. Certainly toxins adversely affect the brain. In everyone.

In us, those people who transition from the typical unhealthy western diet to a healthy, plant based diet, in keeping with our anatomy and physiology, report that they no longer crave junk food or artificially sweet food. People tell me their children don't reach out for all the packaged 'food' at supermarkets. Instead, they gobble up fruit and veggies by the truck-load.

So we have to help cats remember they really are cats. We have to help them sharpen their natural instincts once more.

Naturally, cats are drawn to real food. To the food that they evolved on, that suits their physiology and anatomy. Real food, quality, fresh, nutrient dense food, will automatically start to de-tox your cat. This is essential for their instincts to return and for their overall health.

This may be a long and arduous process for some, but it is worth it.

WHY IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO CHANGE A CAT'S DIET TO RAW FOOD

Cats are fussy eaters for a reason.

In the wild, cats don't eat carrion as dogs do. They only consume what they have just killed. So the raw food must be very fresh. If there is the slightest hint of decay, they will refuse it. They can't handle spoiled meat, so won't eat it. It's a very simple and very effective strategy.

Much of even human grade food is not very fresh. Strategies are applied to keep the meat on the shelf as long as possible. Chicken is one meat that spoils easily. So that is often washed in chlorine. No self-respecting cat will eat that. This seems to be lost in cooking, which may be why cooked chicken is more palatable for many cats.

Generally, the organic or free range chicken won't have been washed in chlorine. And it is more chemically clean.

Obviously, meat sold for pets have even fewer hygiene rules. That may be fine for dogs, but not for cats.

That means sourcing your food is critical.

Chemical Addictions to Entice Eating

Because most commercial cat food starts off with stale and spoiled meat, the manufacturers know they have to somehow convince cats to eat it. Artificially flavouring food has become a dubious art and a lucrative industry. Not only can this override a cats natural instincts, it can create addictions.

Converting from commercial to raw food too quickly can be similar to us going cold turkey from an addiction. It's hard.

Doing it slowly may provide better results. This requires us to be patient and determined. So often, we are in a hurry.

Young cats can tolerate a rapid change over more easily than older cats.

Being Unsure

When we doubt something, we influence those around us. Our thoughts and feelings radiate from us and animals pick them up easily. Even we can, and we are much less sensitive than cats, and other animals. Have you ever walked into a room and felt the energy, making you feel nervous? Or comfortable, at ease? It's coming from the collective thoughts and feelings of the occupants.

So spend time discovering why raw is the healthiest food for your cat. When you are fully convinced, you'll be determined. Then your cat will pick that up. And THAT will make a big difference.

Pulled in Many Directions At Once

We are a funny lot:) We chop and change readily. We're easily distracted. That may not always be a bad thing. But my suggestion is not to shop around and try a lot of different ways at the same time. It can become confusing and that's when we give up. Give one method a good try. If it really doesn't work for you, if you have explored, and I mean REALLY explored, all the different options and it still doesn't work for you, then you can move on.

I believe the above four areas represent the most common hurdles to changing the diet.

Tips to Help in The Conversion

Here are a few tips to encourage a cat to eat good quality, fresh raw food when they aren't used to it

1. sometimes very slight cooking or warming will emit an aroma which is attractive. Do avoid microwaves as these destroy so much nutrition. Taper this warming off as the food is accepted.
2. most cats love yeast. The British eat Marmite, the Australians Vegemite. Another similar one is Promite. These are yeasty (but also salty so be cautious) spreads. Smearing a little onto the food can entice them to eat. Nutritional yeast is a better option as it isn't salty. Sprinkle a little on the food, or mix a little in. Taper this off as the food is accepted.
3. most cats love oils. By adding a few drops of a good quality oil, such as cold pressed safflower oil which seems to suit cats the best, can be irresistible to some cats.

Nutrition Content And Quantity

Commercial cat food is non-nutritious and inappropriate for cats. So a large quantity is recommended that will at least fill the cat up, if not satisfy them.

When you are feeding good quality raw food, you are feeding them REAL food, which is very nutritious. It is satisfying their needs. So you don't need to feed them much - certainly a lot less than commercial cat food.

Two 2oz (2 level tablespoonfuls or 60 grams) meals a day is often enough even for an active outdoor cat, and certainly enough for an indoor-only cat. Cats are meant to be trim, slim, lithe and agile. Their movements are sensual. I love to follow a cat and admire the gentle swaying walk.

An even better option to the above is give just one meal of the meat and add half a chicken wing or a whole chicken neck for the second meal, which is discussed later on.

For nervous cats who burn up their food quickly and appear very thin, then these portions can be increased by up to 50%. Maine coons are a larger breed of cat and they will also need more.

Overweight cats are very unhealthy. They are never overweight in the wild.

A varied diet is always appreciated by everyone.

A healthy cat should only be fed twice a day. Cats are more tolerant of fewer meals than frequent meals. Each meal must have time to fully digest before the next one is consumed.

An ailing cat can be fed up to 4 times a day, if they find it difficult to eat the above amount.

Kittens up to the age of about 3 months, also do better on frequent meals.

Pregnant and lactating cats also need at least 50% more food and may be happier with four meals a day, than two.

However, do bear in mind that digestion takes up a LOT of energy and if your cat is unwell, they may naturally fast so that this energy can be used towards regaining their health.

NEVER be scared that your cat's fasting will damage them. NEVER be scared that your cat's natural fasting will kill them. It's a myth. However, I do recommend that you get professional support from a homeopath or homeopathic vet, preferably one who is on board with a raw diet, if you are concerned.

Caution: mainstream vets don't understand this and are likely to scare you about raw diets and prescribe suppressive drugs, taking you, and your cat, right back to the beginning again.

THE FIRST PART

The information below is for an adult cat who is eating normally. For kittens, pregnant, lactating or ailing cats, see the instructions above. Be adaptable and try to read what your cat is trying to convey to you.

Lets start with the worst scenario - dry food is the only food you feed your cat and it is left out all day.

First Step

Take the food up and only put it down twice a day for a short period, perhaps half an hour. And only the amount needed. Cats are carnivores. They don't graze, as do herbivores.

Do this for a week or two, until you both get used to it.

Second Step

Now add a little canned food, perhaps a teaspoonful, and mix it in with the dry food. You may have to experiment with different flavours and brands to find out what your cat prefers. Some prefer fish, for example.

If this is eaten, increase the canned food daily, while reducing the dry, so that at the end of a week to 10 days, the full meal is the canned food.

If this is not eaten, stick to a teaspoonful of wet food, while reducing the dry food by an increasing amount over a week to 10 day period. This means there will be less and less food each day, so your cat will become more hungry. This will tempt most cats to eat the wet food.

Cats, like people, won't starve themselves. They just need time to adjust. To use an analogy, I've heard that prison food is not very good. But prisoners still eat it as that's all they have.

Discard the food not eaten and put out fresh each meal. Cats will not want to eat stale food. Your dog or the wild birds may eat it without coming to any harm.

You may be able to skip this part and go straight from dry to raw, rather than dry to wet to raw. It depends entirely on your cat.

Third Step

Now your cat is eating only wet food, and twice a day, start to substitute some of the wet food with a little VERY FRESH, GOOD HUMAN QUALITY, MEAT MINCE. I feel chicken, duck, turkey, lamb and goat is best. Ones to avoid are factory farmed chicken (which is washed in chlorine to extend its shelf life and most cats won't touch that).

Only buy VERY FRESH MEAT, HUMAN GRADE, WITH THE LONGEST USE BY DATE from a good quality supermarket, grocery store or butcher.

Only keep the mince in the fridge for a day or two. Freeze the rest in portions and thaw daily. This keeps it fresh and limits waste.

DO NOT FEED FROZEN FOOD. Allow it the thaw.

Wild cats kill and eat immediately. They are not like dogs, who happily eat carrion. This is why freshness is so important.

Repeat as in the second step, but substituting the wet food for the raw food over a period of 1 - 2 weeks.

Experiment with different meats.

And if you only have one cat or they don't steal from each other, you could try diced meat instead of minced. But the pieces may need to be cut in half or quarters.

Once your cat is eating all raw meat, give yourself a huge pat on the back. You have probably achieved the hardest part.

Fourth Step

Get into the routine of buying, preparing, freezing and thawing the foods that are in balance - ie good quality, fresh, muscle meat plus organ meat.

Allow up to a couple of weeks if necessary. You need to feel you have mastered this and everything is now just routine. I suggest you don't leave it longer than this before embarking on the next stage for two reasons:

- 1 - you'll get complacent and stuck
- 2 - this is not a completely balanced diet yet

THE SECOND PART

This is where we introduce the boney meal. This will replace one of the meals.

First Step

Make sure your cat likes chicken before embarking on this. Most cats love chicken, but there are a very few who are allergic to it. This can be remedied by good homeopathic treatment.

If this is the case, try rabbit, quail or duck instead.

Purchase some chicken necks or chicken wings (not legs). Divide the chicken wing into two parts - the drummette, and the middle with end piece. Keeping one back, freeze them individually to thaw out as needed.



Dice the neck or half wing into small pieces using a cleaver or sharp knife (be careful of your fingers).

At the next meal, when your cat is expecting food, give them a piece of the diced boney part. If it is accepted, give another piece and another, until it's all gone.

If it is not accepted, try smearing it with some nutritional yeast or a very small amount of marmite, vegemite or promite, but be careful as there is a high salt content in the yeast spreads. The nutritional yeast is a better option as it is safer to use.

If this is not accepted, withhold the meaty meal for at least an hour if time permits.

Try again tomorrow with a fresh piece of boney chicken (freeze the other diced up pieces to thaw out as necessary as cats need very fresh food). As in the first part, if the cat holds out, reduce the amount of the meaty meal, so they are getting less and less food and are more tempted to try the boney meal.

Once it is accepted, add more, a little at a time. Go at the pace of your cat. Don't be impatient.

Caution! - if your cat has mouth inflammation, they may not be able to crunch up on the bones as it may cause pain. However, if they ARE eating, you can still heal this condition using this method. It will just take more time.

Initially they may just swallow the little piece whole. That's fine, as that is still providing them with the nutrition they need. As their health improves, so too will their gums. Then they'll start to cautiously crunch.

Be patient!

You can also consult me or a good homeopath or a real (there are many pseudo) homeopathic vet you know and trust. Stomatitis and gingivitis are chronic conditions and need knowledgeable prescribing and support to truly heal it.

Vets will generally prescribe antibiotics, steroids and advice teeth extraction. Please don't buy into this. It's traumatic, doesn't deal with the cause and can be very expensive.

If your cat has already had all their teeth removed, they may still be able to eat the cut up pieces, after healing. The palate hardens and they mostly swallow them whole, but it is still beneficial to their health.

Note

If your cat finds it hard to progress through the stages, stay at the one stage they can cope with, a bit longer. After a week or two, try again. Keep pushing them gently. Don't give up.

Second Step

Once the cat is eating all the cut up boney pieces in place of the meaty meal, then gradually increase the size of the piece. Do this slowly over the period of a week or two, as your cat adapts.

While they may have swallowed the small pieces whole, they will have to crunch on the larger pieces, which is what we want.

You're home and dry when your cat can happily, *and enthusiastically*, grab the whole neck, or half wing, and crunch up on that, making short work of it.

My cats jump up at me, to get at their boney chicken. I know how a tree feels... It's the high-light of their day. One of my cats will jump as high as my head in her enthusiasm! I don't hand them the boney part, I throw it at them, otherwise I'd be lacerated.

[This is definitely another time to celebrate.](#)

Obviously you can change things to suit you both. Some older cats may need more time. Generally, the younger the cat, the faster they adapt.

Addendums

NB1 Please note that fasting is good for everyone. It is also a natural part of life for a carnivore. Hunting is not always successful. Cats can go several days without food and come to no harm (perhaps be more cautious with obese cats). So don't be alarmed if your cat decides to fast. It is an excellent way to focus on something more important, such as de-toxing or dealing with an ailment. Digestion takes up a lot of energy, so cats will naturally fast when

they need to. And the need may be strong when they can, at long last, de-tox from all the chemicals in commercial cat food.

NB2 Some people get alarmed at the detox symptoms that inevitably follow a conversion to a raw diet. You need to EXPECT them.

Toxins must find an outlet and they come out in a liquid. So EXPECT to see vomiting, diarrhoea, discharges from any orifices, skin eruptions or an exacerbation of an existing problem.

In a young cat these may pass almost unnoticed. In an older cat, they may be last a week or more. If the conversion is slow, they may be mild. If it's fast they may be intense, but over quickly.

It's always a comfort to have a knowledgeable practitioner to hold your hand during this process. Mainstream vets don't understand the process and are likely to compound the problem with drugs.

Additional support

Please appreciate that although vital in returning and maintaining good health, a healthy, balanced, raw diet is not always enough. Other factors contribute to poor health such as toxins, stress, accidents, frights, injuries, the genetic inheritance, life style, problems in utero and as a kitten, past traumas and more.

Good homeopathic treatment is probably second to none in its ability to de-tox and return vitality and health. To anyone. From any problem.

If you would like further information on this and on cats general health, or would like to contact me, check out my website - <https://naturalcathealth.com>

I also treat people, and dogs, and...

<https://twolegsandfour.com.au>