

WAYS TO ENCOURAGE WATER INTAKE

- Increasing water consumption by feeding increased amounts of canned food or feeding a dry diet formulated with additional salt. It has been shown that salt significantly increases water intake and urine production. Salt has not been shown to contribute to hypertension or renal disease in healthy cats.
- Canned food should be offered to kittens from the time of weaning, as taste and consistency preferences are established early in life. It may be impossible to make the cat adapt to canned food later in life.
- Multiple small meals may help. It has been suggested that, for a given energy level, the water intake significantly increases by increasing meal frequency.
- It is important to provide easy access to fresh water at all times. Cats are nocturnal and may prefer to drink in the evening.
- Many cats appear to prefer a bowl with a surface area. The water bowl should be kept full at all times. Cats have very sensitive whiskers and many seem to prefer a large bowl in which the whiskers do not touch the sides of the bowl.
- A variety of water types (Brita, distilled, bottle warm tap water, cold tap water) can be offered.
- Do not sweeten the water as cats lack sweet taste receptors (have defective Tas Ir2). Flavoring the water or providing ice cubs flavored by tuna or clam juice may help encourage water consumption. Some complaints (Flavorix) provide different flavors to add to the drinking water to encourage water consumption.
- Some cats prefer a source of running water (water fountains are available for cats).
- It is important to keep food and water bowls away from the litter box area. The water bowl must be clean (cats have a very keen sense of smell and are easily turned off by odors on the edge of the bowl).
- Some cats prefer a clear glass bowl; others stainless steel or ceramic. Some cats prefer not to share their bowl (especially with dogs).

Medi-Cal / Royal Canin Veterinary Diets