

How to get a cat with CKD feeling better - Part 1

As many as [30% to 50%](#) of cats 15 years of age or older have chronic kidney disease (CKD).

While CKD is a serious condition requiring ongoing management, the good news is there are many treatment options available — some dealing with the underlying cause and others aimed at just helping your poor little guy feel a bit better.

The key with CKD is to find a treatment option you can afford, is proven to work, won't interfere with other health conditions and (most importantly) works for your cat.

Finding this combination can take experimentation.

In this two part guide we'll walk you through how you can help your cat with CKD regain some of her joie de vivre.

Hydration

If your Captain Boggins or Ms Mittensworth is newly diagnosed with CKD, chances are there's been a period where they've gradually become run down. They may be in a position of not having eaten or drunk enough for some time.

Getting this right is your first priority.

Most animals (cats, humans, it doesn't matter) can survive less than 72 hours without hydrating. It's the stuff of life and we can't be without it for too long.

As with any health crisis, step one is to keep the body alive with water.

The added complication here is that most cats actually don't like drinking. You're going to have an uphill battle dealing with that low thirst drive.

A few tips to make water more palatable

One option is to add broth to food. Another is to move their drinking bowl to a new area. Your intuition is your best friend here.

If you watch your cat closely (without being too obvious about it—they hate that!) you may well get important clues as to how you can fool/politely convince your cat to hydrate.

Intravenous hydration may be necessary at first

If all else fails, you'll need to get your cat to the vet for intravenous hydration. Don't wait too long!

For more ideas, check out [this article](#) on how to get a cat to hydrate.

Nutrition

Cats crash fast. Even your most sedate lap cat burns energy like it's going out of fashion. If your cat has been struggling with eating for a while, it's important to tackle the problem head on.

Getting easy nutrition in

[Baby food](#) is an option if your bewhiskered patient is really struggling with food. It's mild, nutritious and soft going down.

Switching to a renal diet

Once the crisis stage is past, it's important to transition your cat to a kidney-friendly diet—low-phosphorous foods filled with lean animal proteins.

[The research](#) tells us a renal diet will double the lifespan of a cat with CKD. Needless to say, it'll also take a lot of strain off their body and help your cat feel so much better!

Be careful about lowering protein too much

One important pro-tip here. You might hear that lowering protein is important. This is “kind-of-sort-of true.” Quickly reducing protein intake can result in malnutrition and a swathe of [related health complications](#).

The last thing you want to do is put more problems on your cat's plate!

Do your pal a solid and take things slow and **always** consult with a vet to get their dietary formulation right.

[This article](#) will give you more useful tips and tricks on helping a cat with CKD eat.

Supplements

Then there's supplements to think about. Cats with CKD urinate more and essential vitamins and minerals are likely to become depleted

Vitamin B may be an important additive to your cat's diet. Omega 3 is used in humans with kidney disease and may be of use to your cat also. Potassium may also be required.

None of these dietary additions are too hard to incorporate. They're available in a few applications.

Talk to your vet to get recommendations on which supplements might improve your kitty's energy, vitality and happiness.

We hope this gives you some useful tips for keeping a cat with CKD comfortable and happy. If you're ready for Part Two, [click here](#).

Sources

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