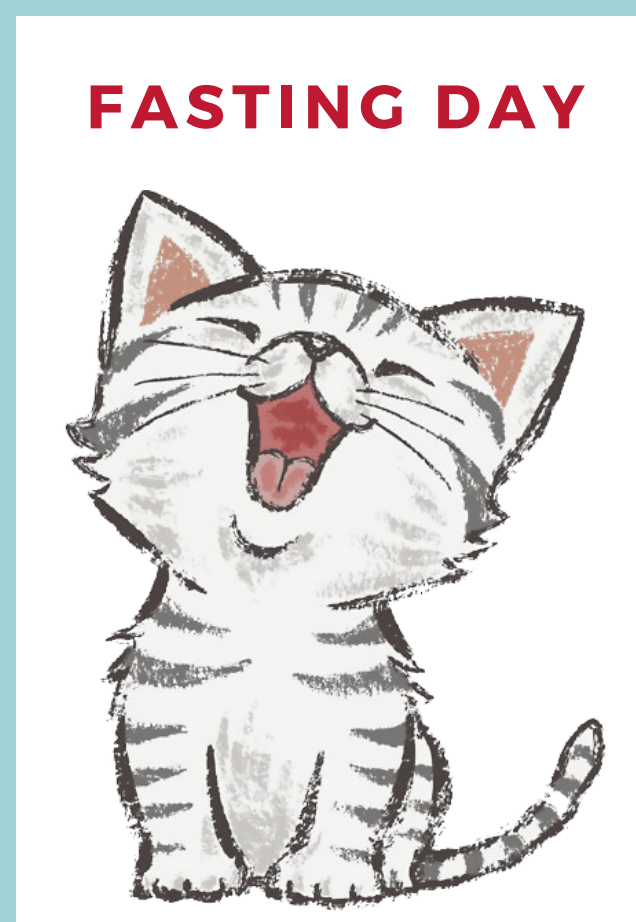
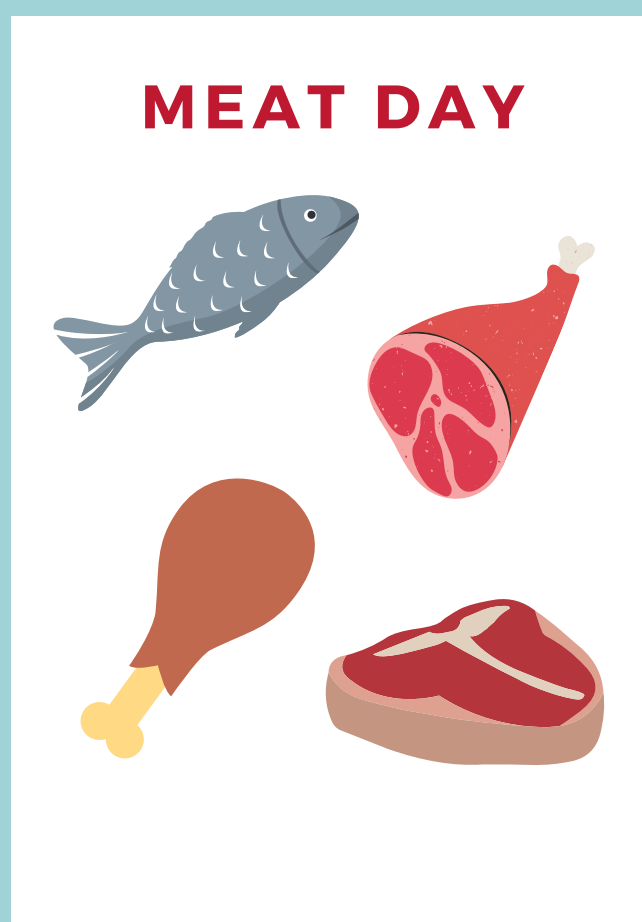


THE NATURAL CAT DIET QUICK START GUIDE



The natural cat diet is based upon what a wild feline would naturally eat according to their anatomy and physiology. Feeding our cats in alignment with their true nature puts the conditions of health into place for a long life, and for the prevention and reversal of disease conditions. For more information on the natural feline and canine diets or help with navigating diet change with disease conditions, please visit our website: TheRawKey.com.

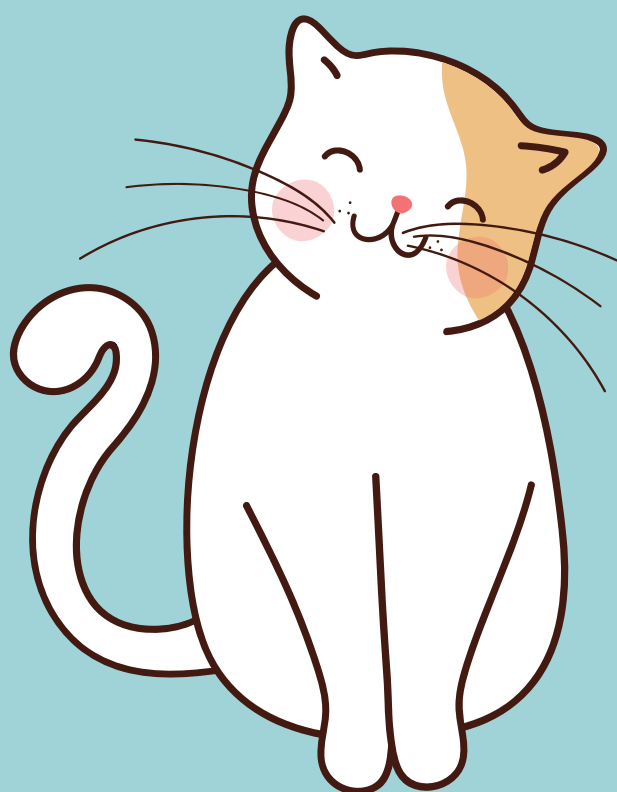
WHY WE FEED THE NATURAL DIET

One-third of all cats fed on the standard kibble and canned food diets end up with cancer. Cats are losing their eyesight, getting kidney disease and heart disease, muscle wasting, and a long list of other negative conditions at an alarming rate. Cats are living shorter lives with more chronic health problems than ever before. This is not a natural progression, but a direct result of what we feed our cats and kittens.



We have seen the effects that straying from our natural diet has had on human health, and now we are recognizing those same conditions being manifest in our beloved companions.

What we feed will either be the greatest benefit to building healthy cells and maintaining the body at its ideal state or it will be a form of poison, slowly and insidiously breaking down the body and creating degeneration and chronic disease in its wake.



We have the opportunity to choose health or disease for the cats in our care simply by choosing the right fuel that is appropriate to their anatomy and physiology. This is why we feed in alignment with nature, to return our cats to the pristine health that is their birthright.

To learn more about how the natural diet was determined visit TheRawKey.com

HOW TO FEED

When we look to nature to see how cats would naturally eat we find several key factors that are important, yet are ignored by traditional feeding.



1. A cat's natural prey is very lean with very little fat.
2. A cat will eat the entire carcass, including all bones and fur for most prey.
3. A cat will hunt most often at dawn and dusk taking advantage of the low light.
4. Occasionally, a cat will leave behind some organ meats and some larger bones.
5. A cat's natural foods all have a high water content.
6. Not all hunts are successful. Cats will frequently go entire days without a successful prey kill so periodic fasting is built into the natural model.
7. Cats will follow a binge and fast model if they are catching large prey and will eat multiple small meals if they are eating small prey.

Keeping these facts in mind we build the natural feeding model to most closely match how our cats would eat if they were in the wild. Some adjustments need to be made based upon our lifestyle but the closer to the natural model we get the better our cats health will be.



WHAT TO FEED - MEAT

Cats are strictly carnivores who require raw meat, with bone and some variety over time, to mimic how they would eat in nature. Cats eat lean prey so it's very important to prepare your own meats at home rather than buying commercial foods which are already ground.

Meats:

- Chicken, cornish hen, quail, turkey, duck, goose, guineafowl, rabbit, wild hare, fish, mice, and other small prey are all suitable options.
- Cats can also eat beef, lamb, pork, goat, venison, kangaroo, ostrich, wild game meats, and most other animal proteins, but it is best to keep their primary protein within the smaller prey.
- Most people feeding the natural model use chicken or cornish hen as the primary food and then small quantities of the other listed proteins for variety.
- Whole chicken is recommended as the protein to start with for transitioning as it is the easiest to acquire with organs, is affordable, is well-liked by all cats, and is a suitable size.
- Different parts of the chicken contain different varieties of nutrients so it is important to vary your feedings to different parts, rather than just buying chicken breast or just chicken thigh. Feeding all parts of the chicken is important, so getting a whole chicken is the most suitable option.
- Removing as much fat from the meat is our key to healthy cats. In nature, their wild prey is very lean, while the grocery store meats have been fattened to earn the maximum price. We remove the skin as there is a lot of fat under the skin and it also allows access to remove the largest sections of fat.

WHAT TO FEED – ORGANS

Organs:

- Organs are an important part of the diet and must be included in proportions equal to the natural prey.
- Examples of organs are the liver, kidney, testicles, brain, thymus, pancreas, and spleen.
- The heart, gizzard, lungs, and tongue are not considered organs but fall into the category of meat instead.
- Our primary meats should have organs intact, such as whole chickens with giblets, whole fish, whole mice, etc. When this is done we need not worry about adding organs or adding bone to those meals.
- Sometimes getting chicken with the "giblets" or organs is not an option. In this case, we need to source the organs elsewhere to supplement. Most grocery stores sell chicken livers, beef kidneys, beef liver, pork liver, and other organs separately.
- Organs provide different amounts of various nutrients than muscle tissues. In nature, our companions would be regularly eating the organs in their prey meals so it is essential that we provide these either piecemeal or in the whole prey.
- When feeding piecemeal, such as beef or pork, organs, and bones will need to be added to the meal. The goal is to closely mimic the amount of organ meat that would be in one meal if the animal was being eaten whole.
- If you are feeding mostly whole prey and just adding some pork or beef for variety then the bone and organs from the primary prey will be sufficient.

MEAL EXAMPLES

WHOLE CHICKEN, BEEF HEART, SARDINES

Meal examples using a whole chicken portioned and a small variety of other meats and fish. This is just for example purposes, variety can be spread out across the month or several months and does not have to be all within the same week.

Day 1

Chicken breast with bone + chicken heart

Day 2

Sardines - whole, raw

Day 3

Chicken thigh + 1/2 chicken liver

Day 4

Chicken wing + chicken breast + chicken gizzard

Day 5

Beef heart + chicken drumstick

Day 6

Sardines - whole, raw

Day 7

Chicken drumstick + beef heart

MEAL EXAMPLES

PORK, CHICKEN WINGS, BEEF LIVER, BEEF STEW CUBES

Meal examples using pork and beef stew cubes as primary protein, chicken wings for bone and beef liver for organ. This is just for example purposes, variety can be spread out across the month or several months and does not have to be all within the same week.

Day 1

Pork chop + chicken wing

Day 2

Beef stew cubes + 1 inch cube beef liver

Day 3

Pork chop + 1 inch cube beef liver

Day 4

Chicken wings + 1 inch cube beef liver

Day 5

Pork chop + chicken wing

Day 6

Beef stew cubes + chicken wing

Day 7

Pork chop + beef stew cubes

MEAL EXAMPLES

CORNISH HEN, SMELT, PORK CHOPS, BEEF KIDNEY

Meal examples using a whole chicken portioned and a small variety of other meats and fish. This is just for example purposes, variety can be spread out across the month and does not have to be all within the same week.

Day 1

1/4 Cornish hen + 1-inch cube of beef kidney

Day 2

Smelt

Day 3

1/4 Cornish hen + pork chop

Day 4

1/4 Cornish hen + 1-inch cube of beef kidney

Day 5

Beef kidney + pork chop

Day 6

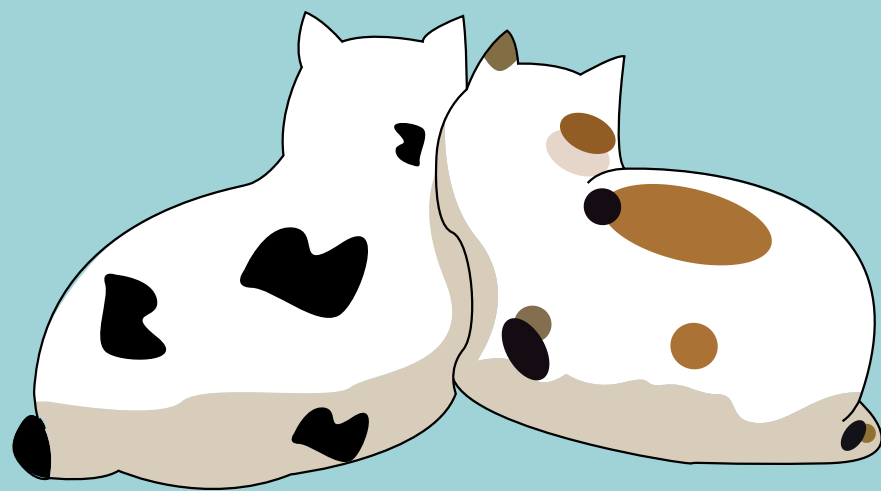
Pork chops + Cornish hen heart & gizzard

Day 7

1/4 Cornish hen + 1 inch cube of beef kidney

WHEN TO FEED

Feeding times are flexible but there are a few basic guidelines that nature provides for us as to what is optimal.



Varying feeding times - in nature prey is not showing up at the same time every day. In the natural model our cats would be catching food whenever the opportunity arises so their eating times would vary significantly.

Feeding around dawn or dusk - low light conditions are optimal for catching prey, so most carnivores are active around dawn and dusk and sleep the rest of the day. If it works with your schedule, try to feed around either dawn or dusk.



Fasting - in nature, not every day will be a successful hunting day. Putting in a fasting day periodically both mimics the natural model better and allows for additional healing and catching up on the backlog of waste that the previous diet created.



WHEN TO FEED

Since most raw feeders are feeding larger prey like chicken, turkey, cornish hen, or rabbit, a single meal per day is generally preferred in most cases. Most cats will thrive on one meal per day, leaving plenty of digestive rest between meals to avoid any digestive upsets and allow for the body to heal from the prior diet. This is usually the best match for our busy schedules and what most people choose.



A large meal will satisfy longer than a small meal. In nature, cats would catch their prey, eat until very full and then go rest. They would not hunt again until true hunger returned, sometimes this would mean several days later.

However, we also have the option of getting closer to the natural model by randomly alternating between one large meal and multiple small meals.

Some days cats will catch a bird, and some days they will only catch bugs. On a bug day, they may hunt multiple times. On a bird day, they will eat their fill and then go to sleep or play the rest of the day.

Whichever model you choose full fasting days where no food at all is fed, should be used periodically. This can be as few as once or twice a month or as much as once a week.

To align more with nature we choose to randomly space our fasting days roughly every 10-14 days.



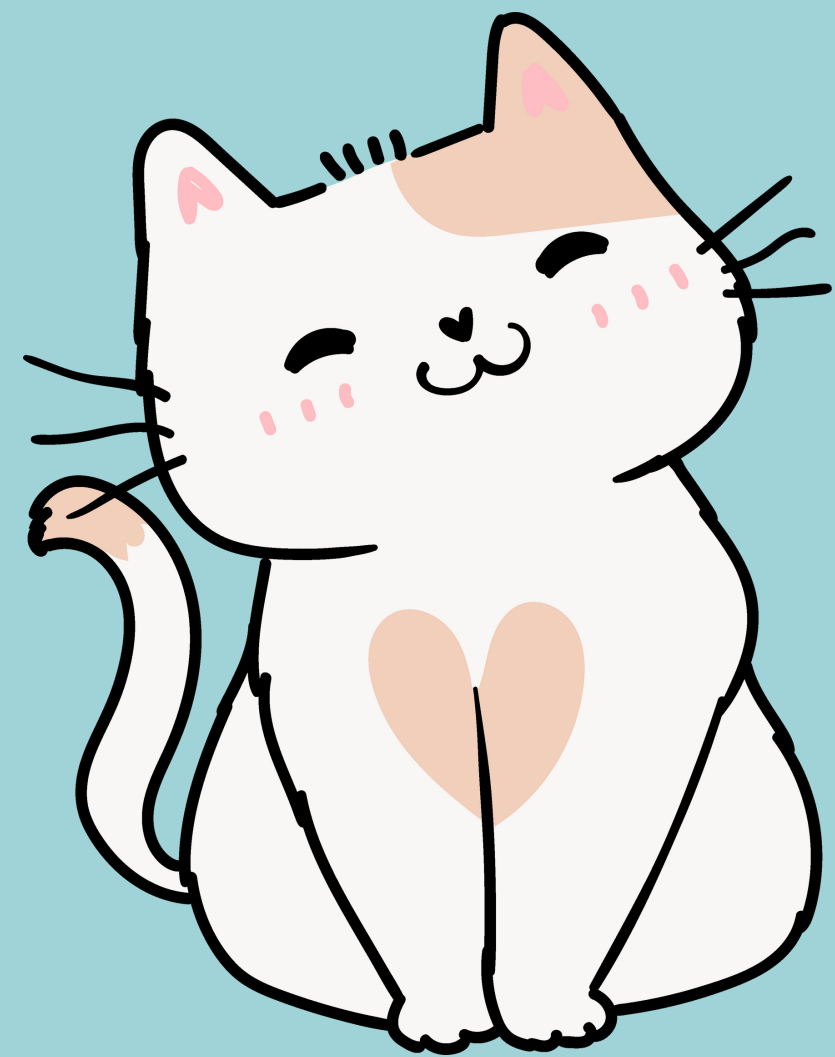
WHY WE FAST



In nature, the cat's hunt is not always successful. Fasting is built into the natural cycles of life when we do not have a refrigerator at our fingertips. Our cat's physiology and anatomy were built based on its needs in nature and not its conditions in our household.

In order to keep our cats free from disease we must seek to match their natural conditions as closely as possible. This includes the benefits of periodic digestive rest.

Digestion is the largest energy burden on the body. From the moment food enters the mouth to the moment it leaves the body as stool the digestive processes are running and taking energy away from healing processes.

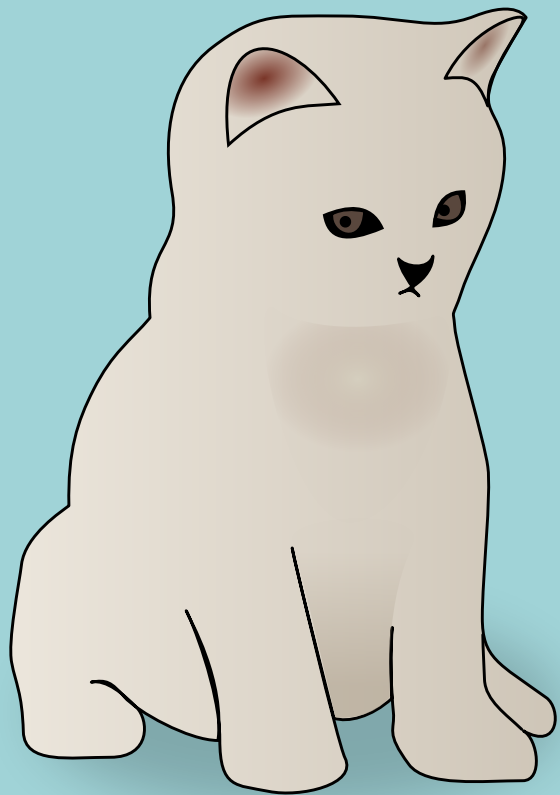


Our cats' bodies are self-healing and self-cleaning. Over time the burden of digestion creates a backlog of waste that the body needs to clean out. If we fail to provide digestive rest the body struggles to keep up with the waste burden and symptoms begin to appear as the waste slowly builds interfering with the cellular functions.



Fasting is a blessing, not a punishment. It allows for much-needed rest and recovery and is important to the pristine health of our companions.

FASTING FOR HEALING

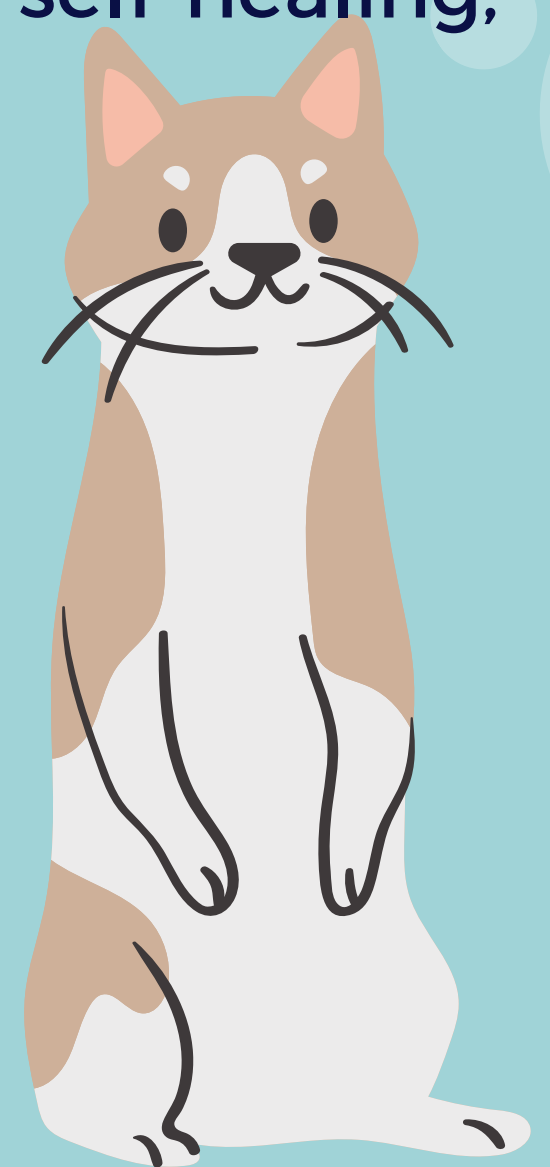


Most people have heard the saying “Feed a cold, starve a fever” but few know that the actual saying was “If you feed a cold you will have to starve a fever.” Shortening that phrase has completely altered its meaning leading to immense suffering. You see, if you feed the body when the body starts a cold cleaning event then the body struggles to complete its cleaning, and a "cold" becomes a "fever".

As mentioned above, digestion steals energy away from the cleaning and healing processes. When humans get a cold and fast their cold symptoms pass rapidly, usually within 24-48 hours or less. However, when a human eats or takes drugs (pharmaceutical or herbal) at the first signs of a cold their cold cleaning event can last for weeks, because the body cannot shift the digestive energy into cleaning processes. If the person continues to eat or take drugs during this time the fever can even progress into pneumonia.

Cats get cold and flu cleaning events just like us humans when their bodies are overwhelmed because they have self-healing, self-cleaning bodies like we do.

This simple misunderstanding of how the body operates leads to completely avoidable suffering. Fasting for our cats is an opportunity to avoid the need for sickness by preemptively allowing time for cleaning and healing regularly. The periodic physiological rest it provides allows the body to clean regularly and consistently instead of being forced to create a larger cold or flu cleaning event later on.



To learn more about the importance and benefits of fasting please visit TheRawKey.com

HOW MUCH TO FEED

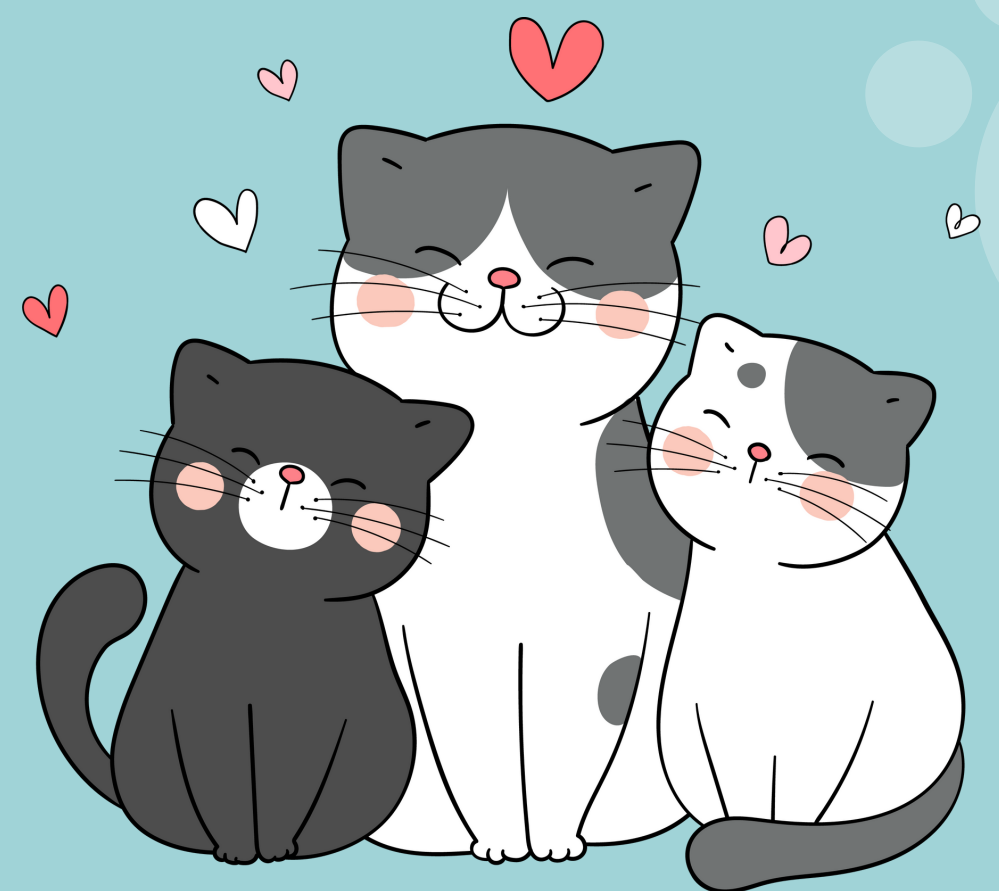


While most people are used to feeding whatever amount is on the kibble bag, feeding naturally does require a little bit more thinking and effort on our part, but not a whole lot. Just a little bit of common sense will get you there.

Cats have different activity levels, from sedentary to highly active. Your cat's activity level and current weight or ideal weight determine how much you feed. If your cat is already lean and highly active then it will likely need a larger portion, those that are less active will need smaller portions. Portions may need to be adjusted up or down as they lose weight and become more active when they are feeling better.

Raw foods are full of moisture making them bulkier. When we cook foods or expose them to heat, we dehydrate the foods, making them more compact and concentrated, and also dehydrate the body when we feed them.

On the natural diet because we are removing much of the fat which is present in a commercial food diet, your cat will likely be eating slightly more than a full-fat commercial food, even if you are starting from a raw commercial grind.



HOW MUCH TO FEED

We have found that most cats do well on a daily portion that is in the range of 4% to 7% of their healthy body weight. Some sedentary or senior cats may be fine with as little as 3% and some cats will go as high as 10-12%.

Starting around 5-6% and adjusting up or down as your cats weight shifts is recommended when starting out.

Examples / Rough guide:

5%

7-pound cat feed 5-6 ounces

12 pound cat feed 9-10 ounces

3 kg cat feed 0.15 kg or 150 grams

6kg cat feed 0.3 kg or 300 grams

7%

7 pound cat - 7-8 ounces

12 pound cat - 13 -14 ounces

3 kg cat - 0.21 kg or 210 grams

6 kg cat - 0.42 kg or 420 grams

The formula for determining the amount fed is:

For Ounces and Pounds: cat's weight in pounds x 16 (convert to ounces) x percentage being fed = serving size in ounces.

Example: 7 pounds x 16 = 112 x .05 = 5.6 so you would feed between 5 and 6 ounces per meal, for 5% of weight.

For Kilogram and Gram: cat's weight in kg x percentage being fed = serving size in kg OR cat's weight in kg x percentage being fed x 1000 = serving size in grams.

Example: 6kg x .05 = 0.3 kg x 1000 = 300 grams, for 5%



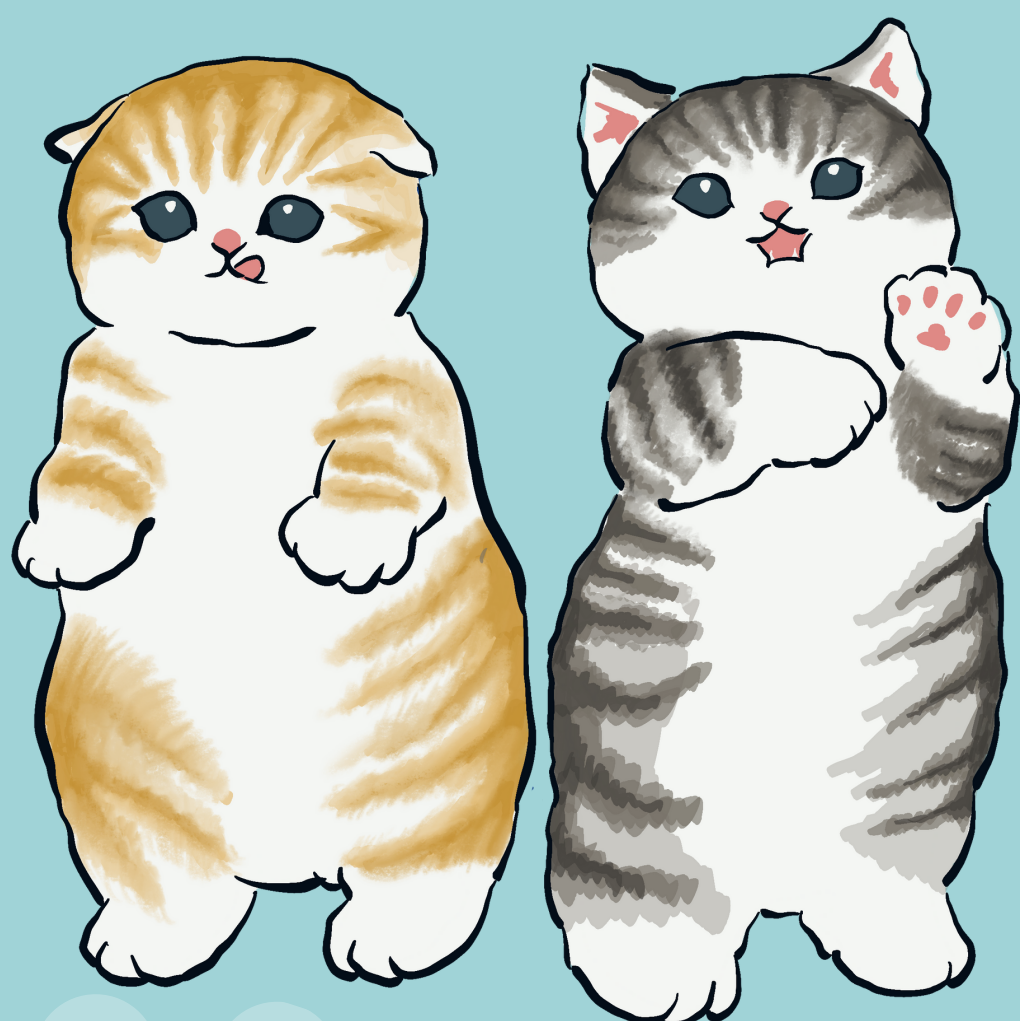
TRANSITIONING TIPS

Many cats will take to their natural foods immediately but for others getting them off the addictive kibble or canned food and on to their natural foods can be a struggle. Cats tend to be sensitive to changes in their environment and in their daily habits and can be very stubborn and dramatic. If you want a healthy cat you have to be prepared to be more stubborn than your cat.

If your cat takes immediately to the raw food then you do not need to do any transitioning, just continue to feed as outlined above.

If your cat rejects the raw at first you will need to step them gradually from cooked to raw.

If you are starting from kibble, start the first week by adding water to the kibble to get your cat used to a different texture.



Whether feeding kibble, canned, frozen raw or home cooked, start by cutting back the portion by about 1/4th the first week and repeating each week.

Add a very small piece of the raw food to your cats bowl so they can get acclimated to the smell of the raw food.

TRANSITIONING TIPS



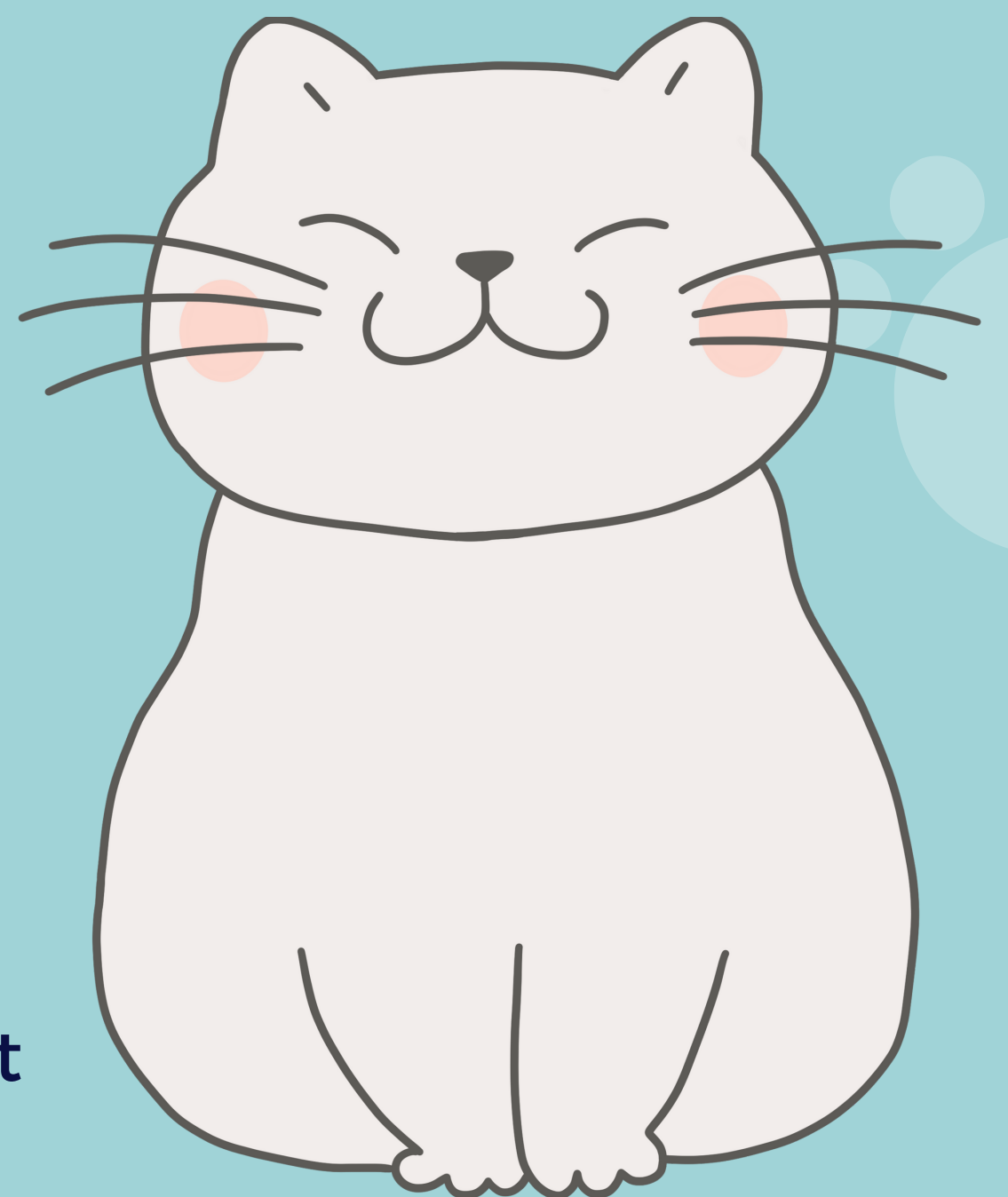
If your cat starts to eat the raw food piece that is in the bowl then at the next meal add more raw food pieces.

Keep increasing the raw food pieces while decreasing the old food.

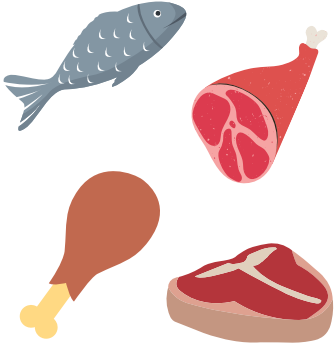
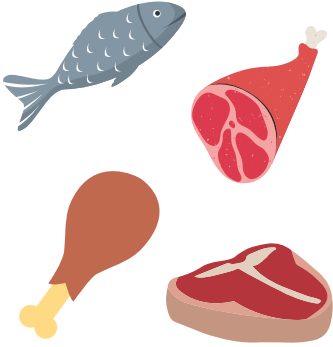
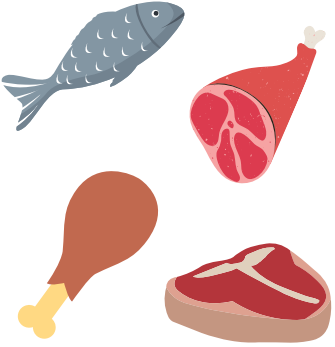
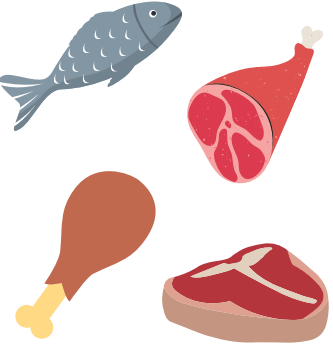
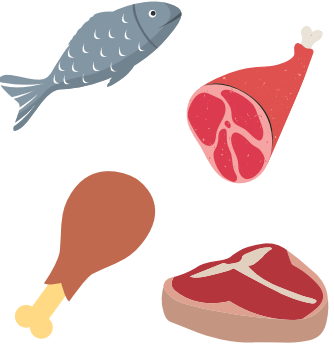
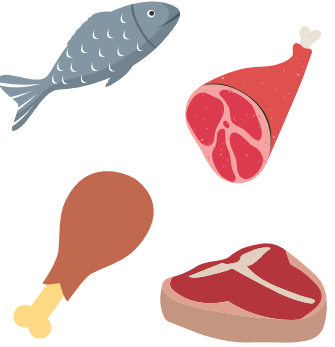
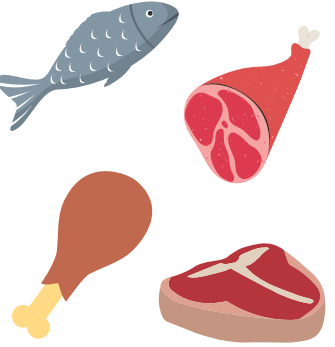
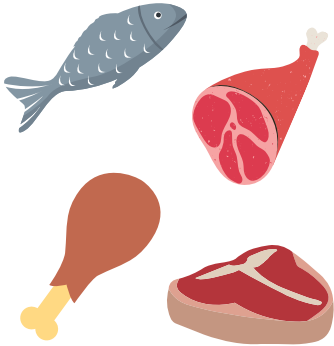
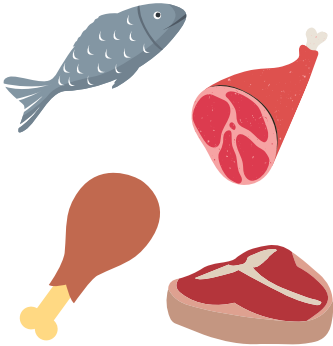
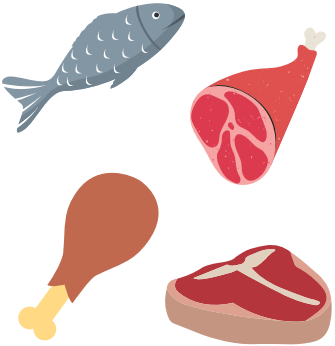
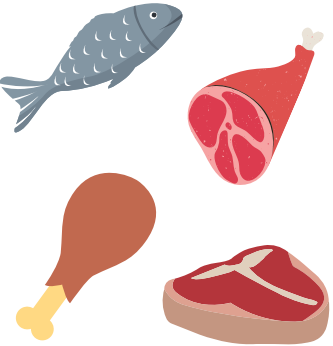

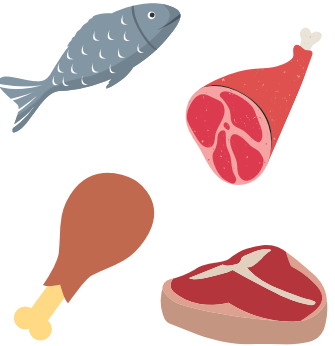
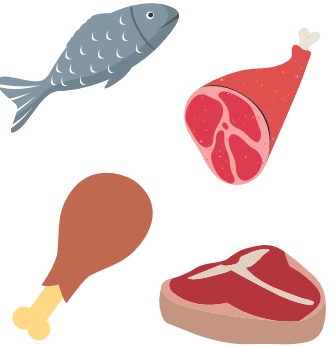
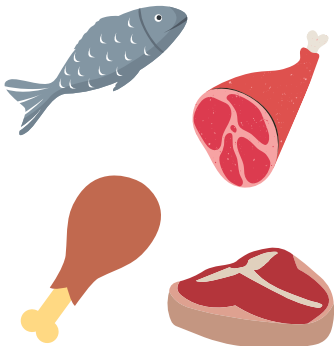
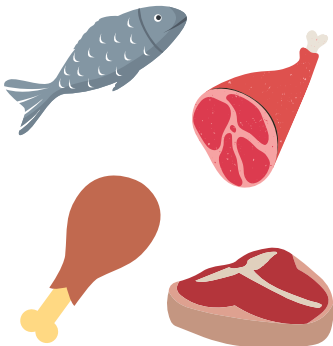
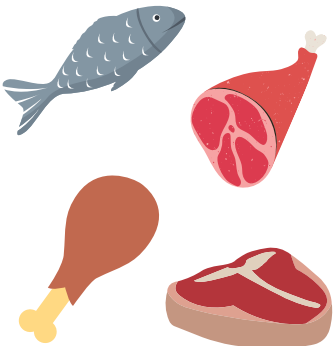
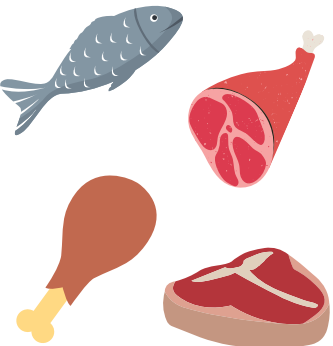
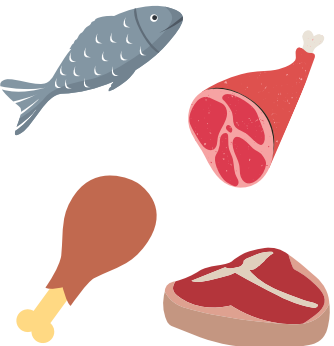
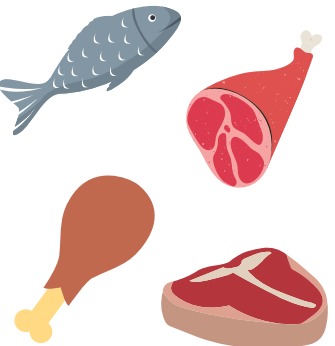
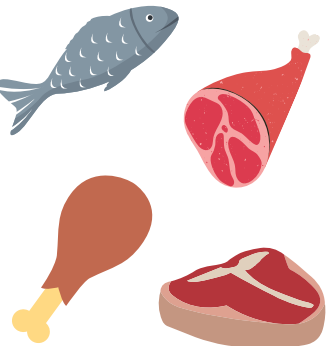
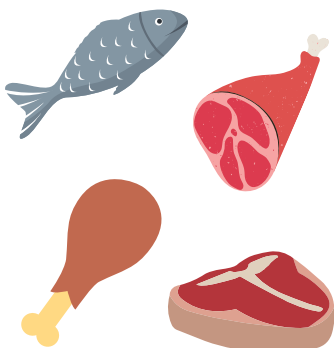
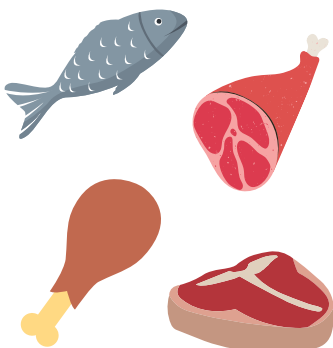

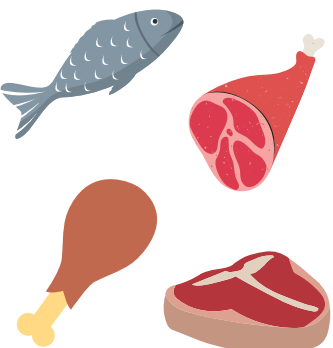
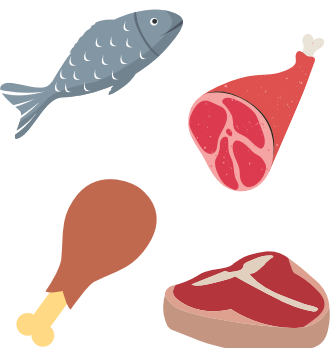
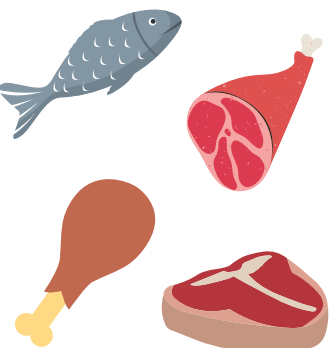
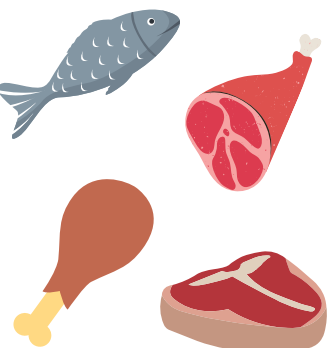
If your cat continues to leave the raw in the bowl then you can try transitioning them from kibble to wet food first, then from wet food to single-ingredient baby food. Then coat the raw food in the baby food.

Keep cutting down the amount of the old food being fed and increasing the exposure to the raw food. No cat will starve itself, so if your cat does not eat and skips a meal there is nothing to stress about. Eventually true hunger will return as you cut their portion of old food back.

If your cat is overweight true hunger can take a long time to return, so keep the portions small and have patience. All animals will eat their natural foods, but just how you will eat a cookie when not hungry, but not an apple, when not truly hungry cats can wait a long time before eating. Resist any temptation to give them a "cookie" by returning to old foods, just so that they will eat.



EXAMPLE 4-WEEK FEEDING SCHEDULE

MEAT DAY 	MEAT DAY 	MEAT DAY 	MEAT DAY 	MEAT DAY 	MEAT DAY 	MEAT DAY 
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QUESTIONS? CONCERNS? NEED SOME HELP TRANSITIONING?

Lauren offers consultations,
articles, and further support
at TheRawKey.com

Coming Soon:

"Healing Cats and Dogs with
their Natural Diet" by Lauren
Whiteman. Sign up for an
email notification of the books
release at TheRawKey.com