

Good Food For Cat With Struvite Crystals?

By [Janet Tobiassen Crosby, DVM](#), About.com Guide

CRE8VE asks: "My sister's cat has struvite crystals. The vet recommended Hills and Waltham S/O foods. My sister's cat doesn't quite like the taste of these foods (he was on Wellness) and my sister doesn't like the fact that they use chicken by-product in their foods. Does anyone have any recommendations of brands and foods that she can give him?"

Comments

(1) Heather says:

January 22, 2008 at 4:56 pm

It's weird that I should come across your question, as it is the very exact question I was searching for an answer to just now! My cat Olive was also eating Wellness before, and suffers from struvite crystals in his urine. Two different vets have prescribed the Waltham and the Hills Science Diet foods for him. Animal nutrition is my passion, and I hope to become a nutritionist one day.

I have spent the past 6 years researching about pet food and nutrition, and have picked up on several things. The first being never feed dry food. Cats with urinary tract issues must have moisture in their diets, and eating dry food keeps them from obtaining enough liquid (and no, they do not know to drink enough water to make up for it, and watering down dry food only causes the development of harmful bacteria that live dormant in spores on the dry food).

The second is my pet peeve about prescription diets. Although they work, the way they work (for urinary tract issues) is by removing the magnesium from the food in order to prevent crystals from forming. Crystals form in the urine only when it is alkaline, and the magnesium reacts with the alkalinity to create struvite crystals. But one thing people don't understand is that magnesium is essential to a cat's diet, or it will suffer other negative health side effects. What you need to do is lower the alkalinity of the diet rather than removing the magnesium. And another thing, you are right, prescription diets mostly contain nothing but grains, meat by-products and harmful preservatives. So, it's no wonder most cats don't even like them. Grains cause alkaline urine. So who on earth invented these UTI prescription diets anyway?! What I keep running into is the consistent recommendation to feed all cats a moist diet high in meat protein, low in carbs, and grain-free. Supposedly, this should solve ALL the health problems a cat would ever have... Good luck! We're all going to need it.

(2) Jill says:

January 30, 2008 at 12:36 pm

Ok, so what should I feed my cat? I'm currently feeding him Royal Canin S/O. Thanks

(3) dublin's dad says:

June 3, 2008 at 11:21 pm

I just today got my cat back from the hospital where they removed a urinary blockage. My comment is this If the veterenarian says feed the animal one type of food why argue. Vets go to school for many years, and seem to treat their patients better than most people hospitals do. It was a sad event to deal with and I hope to not have to do it again. So if vet says do this why not do what they say?

(4) Niff says:

August 13, 2008 at 7:31 pm

What I've come across is that most vets are not experts in nutrition as well medicine....

(5) DixieDiva says:

August 26, 2008 at 4:30 pm

Vets receive little, if any, nutritional education in vet school. Instead what they get are 'informercials' from reps of the commercial pet food industry.

Cats are obligate carnivores and as such are designed to obtain all their nutritional needs from their prey. In the domesticated cat, prey is usually unavailable so we've come to rely on dry kibble loaded with grains and other crap. Grain has no place in a cat's diet. They are unable to process it or derive any nutritional value from it.

If your cat was eating Wellness and developed crystals, I'm stumped. There are some groups on Yahoo! dedicated to feline kidney disease. My suggestion would be to search out those groups and get suggestions from them as to a better food than Hills or Waltham.

(6) Amie says:

September 14, 2008 at 12:57 pm

Mine and a friend's cat have developed struvites while on Wellness Core. I'm currently alternating Solid Gold dry and Wysong's Feline Uretic while she's using Wysong's Archetype. I have not had a recurrence in a year.

(7) Sam says:

September 18, 2008 at 12:43 am

It always astonishes me to see people saying "vets know nothing about food but I know a lot more by surfing the Web." Frankly, I trust sources like the Cornell Feline Health Center over the second or third-hand information circulated on the Web from people I have never met and don't know the backgrounds of. For instance, people like to repeat the "obligate carnivore" line because it makes them sound knowledgeable. Cornell also uses the phrase but does not say dry food is bad for cats. When I see people say that their cat probably died because it was fed a certain brand of food, I have to wonder how would you know? Are you a veterinary pathologist? Did you do an autopsy yourself? People don't distinguish between correlation and causality.

Quite frankly, if my cat had a serious health problem, I would trust the foremost feline health research center in the country rather than relying on the hearsay and anecdotal information from self-educated "experts."

(8) Steph says:

June 8, 2009 at 11:18 pm

My cat also developed large crystals while eating Wellness. He had surgery and now has been eating one of the prescription diets with no recurrence of crystals. The food is very irregular though and not consistent so I am looking for a better food that will not cause crystals to re-occur.

(9) Lana says:

June 26, 2009 at 10:23 pm

My cat became allergic to chicken after switching to Hills Diet. No more of that crap. Some vets are just cannot be trusted.

(10) To Lana says:

June 30, 2009 at 4:01 am

Hah! How on earth do you expect the vet know that your cat is allergic to chicken in the first place? Bet you didn't even know it yourself.

(11) Karen says:

July 8, 2009 at 8:42 am

Very strange that many of you mention struvite crystals and Wellness food. My coon cat is 5 years old and has just developed struvite crystals. She was also on Wellness Healthy Weight and

Wellness Indoor cat. She has just started with Hill's C/D. I'm hoping this will help her.

(12) allyson says:

July 16, 2009 at 8:58 pm

one of my cats has struvite crystals and has had recurrences while on prescription food as well. this makes me very angry. the best result i've had is purina o.n.e. urinary health formula. he's never become ill while on this diet and only seems to have problems when i try a new [and always more expensive] urinary health formula—whether prescription or iams or science diet or whatever. strange...

(13) Brat says:

July 25, 2009 at 1:03 pm

I feel that as a pet owner you have to take initiative and do research. What do cats in the wild eat? Rice, wheat, flour, barely? I've never seen a cat cook a bowl of hot cereal. And if they have, they'd still have moisture in their food. Dry cat food & stress are both the common links to feline crystals. The food is totally dehydrated. A mouse is made up of over 80% of water. Dry food has 10%. If that's the case, why would a vet recommend dry food as part of the solution? Our 3 year old female Siamese has been diagnosed with struvite crystals. I am not about to put her back on dry food if that is partly to blame. I did not purchase the food that our vet recommended. Not without doing proper research. She has been on blue buffalo for 2 yrs & prior to that royal canin. We now are looking into a raw diet as that is what we have our puggle on. We may even switch to a high quality can food. I think orijin may have one. Vets are like doctors, they push food that reps insist on. No different than people doctors. I do feel at times, vets go into their field of expertise with good intentions. I also know a vet who dropped out cause, eventually she saw that they could & were making some animals sicker. I don't have answers. I'm on here for the same reasons. I love my animals, all animals. I'm doing my research & I ask you to do the same.

(14) Clairly says:

August 5, 2009 at 10:08 pm

hmmmm, I too have a male cat that has been having issues due to Wellness food...not sounding good for that company. Heather, I am pretty much where you are at, have been searching for years for the best nutritional diets for my pets, with little help from my vets. Not that I don't care for my vet, he is good. But when it comes to nutritional issues I really don't feel that many vets have done their homework. I almost lost a black lab due to skin allergies, went to many vets to no avail, had to find the answer from searching Medical Journals online and take the printout to a new vet who helped get some of it under control. The rest I worked out with diet and supplements.

I am however a bit stumped on what to feed for the struvite crystals. The by products and grains really are a turn off in the diets prescribed by vets. I almost had my boy switched to raw diet till he began turning his nose up at it. Not sure what to do now...currently using the hills, but only because I'm not sure what other venue to try???

(15) Cheryl Albanese says:

August 15, 2009 at 9:33 am

My two cats have only been fed felidae all their 2 years of life. My female just came down with a quarter size struvite stone that was removed. My male cat is having to be put to sleep today because he is blocked and they are unable to clear him. They are brother and sister cats. I want to feed my cats a food that is by-product free which is why I fed them felidae to begin with.

(16) Kathy says:

October 13, 2009 at 12:14 am

Glad to have found some comments. I was looking for support. Our cat just came back from the emergency clinic due to crystals. I was intrigued to think maybe going to raw foods might be helpful. I also fed him wellness. I am wondering about that now. we have royal canine from the

emergency vet and like everything else for animals and humans we have to be cautious of who is paying for what and the influence they have. It is difficulty.

(17) Persian lover says:

October 16, 2009 at 7:45 pm

To all of you whose cats got crystals and you fed Wellness, are you referring to Wellness wet or Wellness dry? There's a huge difference in water content, and water is extremely important in the prevention of crystals.

Good quality wet food is the answer.

Also, if you have a cat who becomes blocked, that could be due to anatomy. Some cats have very narrow urethras, and become easily blocked by crystals. For some of these cats, a vet may be able to place a urinary catheter to unblock them, and a change in diet and encouraging more water consumption will prevent a recurrence. For other cats, surgery to increase the size of the urethra will take care of the problem once and for all, but it's always a good idea to feed grain free wet food and have lots of free water around for the cat.

(18) persian lover says:

October 16, 2009 at 8:13 pm

Is it ok to post links?

Here's a really informative link about cat food, written by a vet.

<http://www.catinfo⁵.org/>

(19) Megan says:

November 9, 2009 at 11:43 pm

How Bizarre!

I JUST got home from taking my 2 year old altered male cat to the emergency clinic for crystals.

He has been fed Wellness core DRY cat food since he was old enough to eat dry food. 😞

I am extremely concerned about the number of people on this thread that have had issues with urinary crystals and Wellness brand cat food.

(20) f2x says:

November 13, 2009 at 4:47 pm

My beloved cat of 14 years recently passed away. When he was two years old he started having difficulty with passing urine because of crystals and even had to be "cathed". The vet told me to switch pet food and I did. I used a *dry* common brandname urinary tract maintenance formula and the problem didn't return until a few years later when I had to have him boarded for a week. They fed him the wrong food because they thought he was refusing his regular food, and I had to take him to the vet the very next day of my return. Once he was back on his urinary maintenance formula, things went back to normal and he never had the problem again.

He suddenly passed away three months ago. It was completely unrelated to his diet, and he went quietly in his sleep without any signs of suffering. Arguing over whether vets know cat nutrition is silly. Being politically indignant over the ingredients because it doesn't comply with your belief system of what cats should eat is also silly. I loved my cat, he loved me, his food kept him comfortable and healthy, and we had 14 wonderful years of mutual companionship. If you love your cat, just live with the compromise: Feed him the food he likes that will best control his condition so he can lead a comfortable and healthy life. After all, he is a cat who loves you, and not a political statement.

(21) cheryl says:

November 19, 2009 at 1:36 pm

i agree ppl should listen to vets, most cats have problems because of their breed, obesity and diet. Sometimes the cause is unknown stress is often a factor. correcting these normally gets rid of the problem. Veterinary diets were designed by nutritionalists who have proven they work and

balance the diets better than a home made raw diet would do. Vets know nutrition and will all have experience of what works. if they feel a particular food won't be suitable they will find an alternative. Nurses are also trained in nutrition. Nurses feed the animals when at the vets so it maybe a thought to ask a nurse. Many nurses recommend chappie, scrambled eggs and chicken over hills food post operatively.

In the wild cats would eat veg etc, they would eat grass, birds and mice. bear in mind they are eating intestines etc they are therefore eating the seeds, fruit and veg the birds, mice etc have eaten.

if your cat is allergic to hills chicken cd then buy the ocean fish one! cats should be fed a mixed diet of dry and wet food. This ensures they get moisture but also get crunch for their teeth, to help remove trapped meat etc. Eating bones in the wild would do this. So do feed biscuits and meat!!

(22) karma says:

November 20, 2009 at 5:05 pm

my 3 year old male cat was just recently diagnosed with struvite crystals, after he blocked up twice in one month. he had been eating nothing but Wellness grain-free CANNED food his whole life. perhaps wellness is too rich for certain cats with inbred-stray genetics?

(23) hanna says:

November 27, 2009 at 4:11 pm

Wow! My 2 year old cat became blocked this past summer after being on a Wellness 'Healthy Indulgences' (wet food in a pouch) diet.

Has anyone studied this apparent link between urinary block and Wellness? I'm concerned now. I thought it was a fluke or just bad luck when my cat blocked.

(24) djsdoxies says:

November 28, 2009 at 10:30 am

I am in the same boat as everyone here. I have 4 cats, 2 males and 2 older females. Both my males have blocked, Gable just got home the other day from the ER and I am now mixing the Royal Canin Urinary and the Indoor Wellness. Silo blocked from California Natural and Gable from Back To Nature. I have 6 water bowls out and I leave my faucet at a drip when I am home. They all also get Wellness grain-free can food twice a day. I was at one time against all the prescribed diets, but to have my boys not go through the pain of crystals again, it is worth the compromise to me. But I am going to rething the Wellness dry food. DJ

(25) bumblebee says:

December 1, 2009 at 3:11 pm

my 3 female cats have been on Wellness canned, as well as Taste of the Wild dry- for about a 1 1/2 yrs. 2 of the 3 have had uti's on and off in this time, and now one of them was straining to urinate and I brought her to the vet.. no crystals or blood in urine, but she has a large stone/crystal in her bladder. The vet recommended Hill's c/d and royal canin s/o. (which both contain PORK BY PRODUCTS!!) All the cats have been eating this now for just over a month (to help dissolve crystal), the next step is surgery to remove the stone if it doesn't dissolve on a follow up xray. I have recently been cheating a little and giving them the Wellness canned because it seemed alot healthier (the Hill's and Canin has made her "chunky" looking and giving her gas in just 1 mo.) -aren't these products the feline version of our McDonalds? there's nothing but crap ingredients in them! so what are we to do if a healthy ingredient list from Wellness (could) be the cause of the crystals??

(26) Jess says:

December 9, 2009 at 5:42 pm

i just took my cat to the vet after a bout of bloody urine, and apparently after switching his diet from iams to wellness (canned and dry) he developed bladder stones... my vet told me her boss did a study on wellness pet food and that it made cats more prone to develop crystals. so it's

been studied...

(27) dawn says:

December 10, 2009 at 12:14 am

we also were fighting the struvite problem. we seemed to be living at the vet! he wasn't blocked. he had been a yr ago in jan and had to have the operation of removing his penis to make a larger opening. makes them prone to infections. we went over a yr. then couldn't get the infection under control. fought this from march til june. vet took a sterile urine sample and a bacteria from his mouth was causing this infection. so he's on "pulse" therapy. 9 days-1 clavamox pill a day-thin 6 days no pill. this is dec 10 and no issues yet. thank god!! lolwe were using purina 1 urinary form and they constantly are hungry. an older male is now throwing it up, so we are trying taste of the wild. trying grain free and hope this works.

(28) Lizzie says:

December 10, 2009 at 10:39 am

I'm disturbed by the number of people who have been feeding their cat Wellness foods - who claim to have low magnesium to promote urinary tract health - and their cats still form struvite crystals. Science Diet c/d has .061 magnesium in their foods and Wellness has .098... And Science Diet c/d has .65 phosphorus and Wellness has .93. I absolutely HATE everything that is in Science Diet c/d and I cannot find another brand of cat food that has good ingredients but is also low on magnesium and phosphorus (things that supposedly cause struvite crystals).

There is something called an acidifier that I'm definitely going to try - it's apparently like molasses for your cat... because in addition to low magnesium, they need acidic urine to battle the crystals from forming.

I, for one, am going to write and call Wellness and show them this forum... Either they need to come out with a food designed for this problem or I'm going to stop feeding their food to my cats and come up with something new. They're my babies and they're only going to get the best.

Unfortunately, my cat absolutely hates wet food. He'll eat a bit of it and then walk away to let my other cat finish it... I have no idea what I'm going to do regarding food, except, after reading this forum, that I am definitely getting both of my cats off of Wellness.

(29) Susan says:

December 10, 2009 at 2:09 pm

My 1 1/2 year old cat just finish dealing with struvite crystals as well. He has a water fountain and was feed Nature's Variety Instinct Rabbit formula which claims to be ph balance for healthy urinary tract. I did alot of research on cat foods before I went with Nature's Variety Instinct. It has no grains and my cat really seemed to enjoy it.

My cat does not like the Hills Science food he is on right now. I have been mixing in alittle of his old food but he is not really eating. I agree with the other comments that Hills is crappy food. I was told that you should really be aware of food ingredients that list "by-products" and it contains pork which is a really cheap ingredient. I feel like Hills is just full of junk that has had the magnesium removed. I'll keep feeding him it until he goes back in one month and all is cleared but I really want to find an alternative by then. I've come across suggestion to make the food more acidic but adding cranberry extract., apple cider vinegar. Does anyone know an additive and how it should be used?

(30) Katie says:

December 26, 2009 at 11:46 pm

I think genetics plays a huge role in cat health. I recently had my two cats suffer from urinary problems (female-UTI, male-high urine pH and some struvite crystals) and I had them on a mostly raw and wet diet with a tiny bit of dry. My vet prescribed Purina One Urinary Health and Purina Prescription UR food. They did not care for the wet food so I did research and found that Weruva is recommended for cats with urinary problems. Now my picky female is turning up her

nose at both the wet and dry so I am looking into Wellness. Wellness's Indoor formula has similar levels of calcium, phosphorus and magnesium to the Purina One. Wellness Core has higher levels of these minerals. But after reading some comments, I think I'm going to have to do more research. Wet food or raw is definitely better, but no one can determine how a cat's genetics will affect their health. I grew up with a cat who was fed dry food and tuna his whole life till he passed at 16 from cancer and he never had a problem with urinary issues.

(31) Linda says:

January 4, 2010 at 6:05 pm

I am disturbed by all the comments about cats on Wellness getting struvite crystals. Don't judge Wellness just yet without reading the rest of my comment. I switched my two sibling cats to canned Wellness Core on my vet's advice because they both developed struvite crystals (2 1/2 yrs. old). For those of you who were feeding your cats Wellness dry, and something other than the Core line — don't blame the Wellness brand just yet. FYI — The Wellness Core line is specific to urinary health. Also, you should investigate other causes of high ph in your cats....stress is a huge factor in ph level (my vet told me) and although I keep mine indoors it is clear that by doing so they do lose some quality of life. There is nothing that can be done indoors to match the mental and physical stimulation of prowling around outside, and mine DEFINATELY want to go out. That's not an option (bobcats, coyotes and owls here) so I do my best. The other thing to look at is your tap water. If it's hard water, check into the magnesium levels. I learned that the water here in Phoenix has one of the very highest magnesium levels in the country...not good for kitties. So, I switched to Wellness Core canned food, they get only a mix of distilled and Nursery water (very low sodium and magnesium), and we have designated interactive play time for 1/2 hour morning and night. Guess what — the crystals are gone and have stayed gone!

(32) willa says:

January 4, 2010 at 6:55 pm

a cat I know had bloody urine and struvite crystals—she hates the hills s/d==why can you not just leave the food there—change it everyday of course until the cat WILL eat it? You can't go back to bloody urine.....

(33) Sara says:

January 11, 2010 at 8:48 pm

Interesting. My cat has been on Chicken Soup for the Pet Lover's Soul for six years and has been very healthy. Got a few free bags of Wellness from a friend. I said to myself,"great, free food... cant' go wrong with that." Two months later, Went to the vet. He's got struvite crystals. You do the math.

(34) Stephanie says:

January 12, 2010 at 6:48 am

my cat is 7 years old, just came down with a blockage of struvite crystals. He has been on Wellness Core Dry since it came out several years ago. my younger cat who only eats wet food get Wellness Canned Wet so my older cat now has a mix of both. I really don't want to give him the Hills with all the research I've done but now after all these comments about Wellness I am more confused. I also am taking in consideration the water and stress. It's so tough. just want to do what's best for my kitty. Praying he will not need the surgery, will find out today when they take out the catheter if he pees on his own.

(35) Katie says:

January 12, 2010 at 1:50 pm

A lot of vets have said that feeding your cat a lot of fish is not a good idea, because the mineral levels are higher. One of my cats is allergic to fish and fish oil so I only feed her and my male cat chicken, turkey, duck and beef. It's very frustrating because practically all cat food contains some form of fish.

(36) Stephanie says:

January 13, 2010 at 11:40 am

Has anyone had any experience with berry balanced solid gold or ph biotic by Wysong? i see Wysong also has prescription diets but is available only with a vet's prescription...how do u get that when the vet says Hill's is the only way?

(37) Rico says:

January 21, 2010 at 11:13 pm

In December 2008 I switched my male cat to Wellness canned (turkey and chicken varieties) and Wellness Core dry from Science Diet Nature's Best dry (both Chicken and Ocean Fish). He had been on Nature's Best for years. At the time of the switch, he was obese but never had any bladder issues. He lost a few pounds on Wellness due to the low carbs but in November 2009, he had surgery to remove three struvite bladder stones. My vet prescribed Hill's C/D canned but I chose to go with a combination of Wellness canned and Wellness Core canned, using only the chicken and turkey varieties. Four weeks later, his urine was tested and many crystals were found. His pH was an alkaline 7.5. My vet again prescribed Hill's C/D but I argued for a more holistic approach. She did some research and suggested Innova EVO canned. So I switched him to Innova EVO Turkey and Chicken Cat and Kitten canned and he's been eating only this for the past three weeks. A couple of days ago his urine was tested again and he passed with flying colors! No crystals and a slightly acidic pH of 6.5. I've also noticed that he urinates larger amounts with no straining. He will need continued monitoring but hopefully his bladder issues are behind him. I'm not sure exactly what to make of all this, but I'll be feeding him EVO only for the foreseeable future as long as he stays healthy on it.

(38) jennyfir says:

January 27, 2010 at 3:00 pm

Hi all. Interesting reading all your comments. How come so many cats are suffering from these Struvite crystals? When I was growing up in london in the 1950s- 1960s everone fed cats only table scraps & the rest they caught themselves. A mouse or bird is a perfect meal for a carnivore cat. Now that our cat has recently been blocked & we spent loads at the Vets to have him treated, we have been looking into a more natural diet. Have a look at website "Raw Meaty Bones" for excellent suggestions. Our cats looked shocked when handed a fresh chicken drumstick for the first time but now happily chew thigh as well- bone and all. We are looking to buy fresh rabbit from butcher for a change (although cats cannot live on rabbit alone). Reptile food suppliers also sell raw food for cats & dogs. Maybe worth a try & stop so much suffering for our pets.

(39) Laura says:

February 4, 2010 at 10:20 am

Very interesting. Back from the vet yesterday with struvite crystals still there. Blockage is gone from November. Advised very little dry food, majority of wet food. Was recommended Hill's Prescription CD but hte cat hates it as do I. My cats are all on Horizon Legacy grain free dry with water (absorbed into the dry) and about 1tbsp of wet Wellness. I argued with the vet last night re: their food versus a healthier food (what cat needs a pesticide?ie corn gluten) and she recommended Wellness as the other option...now I read all this...do i put him on the Wellness Core Wet or not? HELP!

(40) Carole says:

February 4, 2010 at 2:17 pm

My male cat got blocked after I switched from Science Diet to a high-protein, grain-free diet (various brands of canned, and dry EVO). I had to switch him back to Science Diet, which I hated to do. A couple years go by, and I try the high-protein/grain-free diet again, thinking the first time was a fluke. After about 6 weeks, struvite crystals again! Back to Science Diet C/D dry and canned. I'm so frustrated - I hate all that cheap grain filler, but my cat doesn't seem to be able to tolerate anything else! And it's a shame, because my other cats were doing just fine with the

high protein diet!

(41) Rico says:

February 6, 2010 at 12:56 am

For alternatives to prescription diets or other urinary formulas, so far the following successful testimonies have been posted:

Linda, Post 31: Wellness Core canned as the only food (both flavors?), mix of distilled and nursery water, and designated interactive play time for 1/2 hour morning and night.

Myself, Post 37: Innova EVO Turkey & Chicken Formula canned as the only food since 12/29/09. Testing to continue over several months to confirm success.

Both of the above diets are high protein, grain free. For those who have tried the grain free approach using a combination of foods without success, perhaps individual components of the combination would work. Working in consultation with your veterinarian, you could try serving only one food for two to three weeks, then have a urinalysis performed, with additional testing in the future as recommended by your veterinarian. If this new diet solves the problem, you could continue with this single food and at some point, if you desire, add another food and see what happens. By isolating specific foods, you will know exactly what works and what doesn't for your cat. No matter how you approach it, I would definitely recommend keeping your veterinarian involved in the process.

(42) Sabine says:

February 9, 2010 at 8:54 pm

I am at wits end, my cat just got back from the hospital after being completely blocked, he gave me no indication that he was not feeling good. The vet put him on Hills sd, I after reading what is in the label I was...upset to say the least. He would eat that stuff so I went on line to seek out more information. I thought wellness was a good product but after reading all of these comments I am much so afraid of feeding him that diet. I think I will put him on an all raw diet, and order some Capon supplement to raise his acid level in his urine. I just started to feed him Wellness and he likes it (In the pouch) now I am afraid to feed it to him Help

(43) jean says:

February 10, 2010 at 2:16 am

My cat was eating Wellness too and is in the emergency hospital (2nd time this week) for blockage! What wet food are people trying with success? The vets have not given me a food recommendation and I do not want him to die =(

(44) Jean says:

February 10, 2010 at 2:21 am

The food he has been eating since I adopted him in august is Wellness Core Dry. Two trips to the emergency room this week, over \$1000. So sad!

(45) Katie says:

February 11, 2010 at 9:18 am

I highly recommend Weruva to cats with urinary issues. My male cat had a urine pH of 8.0 with crystals and refused to eat the Purina prescription wet food. After doing some research I found that Weruva is recommended for cats with struvite crystals. It has low levels of magnesium, phosphorus and calcium. The problem with a lot of cat foods, both dry and wet, is that they contain some type of fish. Even if the main ingredients are meat. Fish based cat food is known to cause crystals and inflammation in cats. My female cat is currently on Wellness Pouches (no fish flavors) and is doing fine. I emailed the company and received the percentages for the minerals I mentioned above and they are quite reasonable. After about a month on Weruva my male cat's pH went from 8.0 to 7.0. For any cat with urinary problems, please avoid dry cat food (or only feed a tiny bit-my male cat gets 1/8 cup of Purina Urinary Tract Health dry a day) and fish based cat foods.

(46) Dawn says:

February 14, 2010 at 6:59 pm

I have two cats that are brothers and 1 1/2 years old. Tails developed the crystals. Trying to fix it ourselves we switched to the Wellness Core. Since he did not improve he is now on the Purina UR St/Ux and an anti-inflammatory which he will also have to take for the rest of his life. Neo continued to eat Wellness and started with the same symptoms today. Tomorrow I will be returning the Wellness and starting him on the Purina and an antibiotic. Someone said not to blame Wellness but after reading the other comments, I really don't know what else to think.

(47) Sue Ellen says:

February 16, 2010 at 9:49 pm

In response to post 38...do some research on raw diets. I had read somewhere that butcher food and raw meats from stores did not contain all the nutrients needed for optimum health. One thing that especially sticks out in my mind was that with non-freshly killed meat (as a cat would have if he/she was out hunting) something happens to the calcium in the bones right after death and the calcium is no longer a good source of calcium...if any of that makes any sense! Also when I looked into it, I was told that there is a lot of extra minerals/supplements that should be added to make the diet as a cat would actually get in hunting. Anyway, hope this mumble jumble helps!

(48) Deep Search says:

February 19, 2010 at 1:01 am

My cat developed urinary blockages two times due to crystals. We tried getting him a pet water fountain to get more water into him, but he still had a reoccurred of crystals. So now he is on Hill's Prescription diet, even though the ingredients of the food aren't ideal. He's also on feline Cosequin for bladder health.

He was on a good brand of dry food prior, Innova. None of my other cats have had problems on that food, this cat is just predisposed to crystals. He is a long hair cat, which are more likely to get crystals, and males are also more likely to get blocked. Plus we decided that stress was also a factor. Whenever he got blockages there was some kind of disruption in the house that must have stressed him out. Some vets recommend a mood elevator for cats who get crystals due to stress. The vet said if my cat gets blocked again he will get some new medication for that. So keeping your cat in a calm stable environment helps.

Also be sure to not let your cats eat foods high in grains. A cat that eats food high in grains or inappropriate food, like if a cat steals dog food or biscuits, can result in crystal formation and blockage. I was annoyed that the prescription diets still have rice/corn in them...

So far the Cosequin and Prescription Diet s/d and c/d have worked for him. And we always have a pet fountain going to encourage drinking. Sometimes he will still steal Innova kibble, but very little. I may give him some Innova Evo canned all meat food with his Hills food so he gets more nutrition. But right now I don't want to take him off the prescription diet because I'm afraid if he gets stressed again he will get a blockage.

I did find one review of EVO canned cat food that said it has successfully been used in treating cats with crystals. But results may vary.

(49) Deep Search says:

February 19, 2010 at 3:18 am

Also look into Wysong foods. They have prescription diets called Struvatrol and Uratrar. Struvatrol™ is a prescription pet food for dogs and cats that aids with struvite crystals, bladders stones, FLUTD, and urolithiasis. Uratrar™ is a prescription pet food for dogs and cats for UTI, FUS, oxalate, urate, and cystine crystals. These are foods without fillers and byproducts like other prescription diets. And they make some all meat canned foods and freeze dried food you rehydrate.

Also they have supplements that are made to balance the PH of urine and prevent crystals. You just have to get the right kind for the type of crystals your cat gets.

(50) Kim from So Cal says:

February 24, 2010 at 11:42 pm

We have two female indoor cats, both 3 yrs old, who were just diagnosed with high levels of Struvite. Both cats have a urine pH of 8.5! Struvite in one cat was 4-10, in the other 2-3, plus high protein.

We have been feeding these cats for two years with a half wet-food/half dry-food diet 2x/day. Neither is overweight. We use the Trader Joes wet cat food, Chicken, Turkey & Rice. It seems pretty healthy with 0.025% max magnesium and 9% min protein. The dry food we've been using is California Natural Pure & Simple Chicken & Brown Rice Formula. Now that I know more, it seems high in magnesium at 0.12%. It was recommended to us right after we got our cats (2+ years ago) and one of them was barfing all the time. We are going to phase this food out and use the Hills C/D that our vet recommended if our cats will eat it. Our cat with the highest struvite went after it before the wet food tonight! Perhaps it has something that her body needs after all. We were also giving her cat treats from Trader Joes when she scratched on the scratching post instead of the furniture. Guess we'll stop that as who knows if those have been contributing to the high pH.

Initially, I was reluctant to feed the Hills C/D due to it being full of grains that seem to be not healthy. After a day or more of research, I'm going to try it. According to my vet's recommendation and the research I've done, it seems to do the trick for Struvite and alkaline urine. Feeding a raw diet is not realistic for us. I'll continue w/ a combo wet/dry 2x/day after slowly switching from our current dry food.

I'll have the urine checked in a couple of months I guess. Any idea on how long I should wait for a re-check?

Also, our water is very hard here in So. Cal. I have to put acid in my pool all the time to keep the pH down....so maybe that is part of it too.

This forum has been very helpful and informative.

(51) Rico says:

February 25, 2010 at 9:46 pm

A follow up to posts 37 and 41:

Innova EVO Turkey & Chicken canned as the only food continues to work wonders for my almost 10 year old cat. Earlier this week he passed his second urine test – no crystals – and an ultrasound test revealed a clear bladder. He's been on this diet for two months now. My vet is very impressed and recommends waiting another three months until his next urinalysis. Obviously, I'm thrilled with the results to date.

(52) Nancy W says:

March 14, 2010 at 3:13 pm

My male cat, now nearly 11, had a blocked urethra about 5 years ago. He was seen in the vet ER, catheterized, and put on Canin Control wet. He and his litter-mate sister have eaten that, plus the UR dried (?Purina) since then and we have had no recurrences. We have hard water. The vet stopped carrying the Canin, for what reason I do not know, and now they are getting the UR wet and dry. The list of ingredients is long, which makes me suspicious, but I can see that many are actually vitamins. Yes, there are by-products.

I have gotten a lot from reading this site. I have talked with one pet store owner who gave the same story mentioned here about fish. But she was, among others, recommending Wellness. So now I wonder.

I am curious. Do I need a prescription for the EVO? Does anyone have longer term experience with Wysong?

My own thought about why we are drawn to some of the foods, the "whole foods" and the raw foods, is that they make sense to us. Some look and smell great to us as humans. Closer to the

source and all...but, as someone said here, animals in the wild eat more than just protein...they eat grass and greens and who knows what else.

I am left feeling like I am definitely not the expert here...but I am thinking about this a lot, and this discussion is good.

(53) Rico says:

March 15, 2010 at 8:38 pm

The Innova EVO line is made by Natura Pet Products, Inc. You do not need a prescription, but the brand is not sold by major retailers such as Petco or PetSmart.

To purchase any of the Innova EVO products, go to their website evopet.com and click Where to Buy. From FAQ's:

"We do not sell our natural pet products to mass merchandisers or national chains. All of our pet food distributors and retailers are independently owned pet supply shops, vet clinics, groomers, feed stores, kennels and health food stores. People just like you, who care about healthy animals, operate these stores. We are very loyal to these people, for without them, there would be no Natura."

(54) meowzer says:

March 22, 2010 at 11:12 pm

Wow. I'm kinda surprised to be reading this, but this is just confirming my suspicions. My two cats (big male, little female) have been on Wellness Turkey and Salmon since last summer. They were on EVO dry food before, but my male cat was gaining too much weight (both indoor), so I got them off it and switched them to the wellness canned. This winter, my male cat developed struvite crystals and had to be hospitalized for a blockage at the end of Jan. The vet put him on c/d canned and dry, along with an acidifier. He wouldn't eat the canned so I did a combo of c/d dry with Wellness, thinking that would suffice.

Well, fast forward 2 months later, and after only a month of being off the acidifier, he had to be hospitalized again this weekend for more struvites! No blockage this time, but there was blood in the urine and it was not a good time.

Needless to say, I'm taking them both off of the Wellness indefinitely! We'll have to see how he does with Royal Canin SO. I'm hoping this is the culprit, but still I will be upset if it turns out that this well-respected brand wound up putting my poor cat through 3+ months of hell, and costing me \$1500!

(55) claire says:

March 24, 2010 at 7:56 am

Ok stop with the food....my cat never really liked the foods either and eventually they stopped working! My cat had urinary crystals for years...hundreds spent at the vets not to mention the extra stress my cat and I had every time we visited the vets. By chance I saw a new vet one day and she recommended a drug called HYPOVASE!! Believe me it is a miracle I can't stress this enough!! Its for men with prostate problems, so it actually relaxes the muscle in the penis so allowing the crystals to pass easily! He has been on this medication for a year and a half now with no side effects and no problems whatsoever, just a happy normal cat who is back on regular wet felix food!!! My vet actually commented that my cat was one of the worst cases of crystals they had ever seen! I get a prescription from the vet and go along to my local pharmacists to collect (CHEAPER!). It costs me about £20 for 6 months worth of tablets!

(56) Toni says:

April 1, 2010 at 1:09 pm

In response to Heathers comments: The dry hills sd and cd are designed to increase the thirst of the cat. I have 2 cats. one has stones and the other had a blockage with crystals. The diets have worked very well and my cats drink a ton of water! My suggestion is to write down all your questions and ask a vet. Also when you make a diet change, mix the food with the old food for a

week or two, to prevent stomach upset. Good luck.

(57) T says:

April 8, 2010 at 9:31 pm

Our cat has cost us lots of money with this problem. He gets struvite crystals and he gets blocked. About 4 or 5 years ago it started. He went to the vet every 2 weeks for a month and a half before they finally got the problem solved with Royal Canin SO. He refused to eat any of the can food they tried. After he was on the SO for a while the vet said to feed him some Friskies can food, the more gravy the better. He needed the moisture. He wouldn't drink very much and at first refused Friskies can food too. He eventually started licking the gravy off the food. He was put on distilled water. Fast forward to about a year ago. Our current vet said our cats were gaining too much weight and it was due to the SO. We switched them to Wellness Indoor. This week our cat blocked again. He was trying to urinate and only passing spots of blood. He was taken to the vet, unblocked and we are back on SO. He still refuses to eat the can food they want him too. The vet has suggested putting the cats on Science Diet WD to prevent too much weight gain. Does anyone know much about that food or any other info. on the medicine mentioned above - HYPOVASE?

(58) Katie says:

April 10, 2010 at 8:06 pm

I think any Science Diet brand has low percentages of phosphorus, calcium and magnesium but of course the ingredients are not all that great. Canned food is always best, but there will always be the cats that refuse it. My cats like Weruva and Wellness Pouches. So far they are doing quite well.

(59) CF says:

April 12, 2010 at 9:21 pm

Wow, this has been very helpful. I am feeding my two cats canned wet food, along with Orijen kitten & cat dry food, but I wanted to mix it with another dry food more specific to urinary issues, b/c my male cat had had blood in his urine a while ago (been okay since) and the Orijen PH balance is slightly low 5.5 (6 to 6.5 is recommended). I was trying to decide between the Wellness Complete Indoor Health or the Wysong Uretic. They don't really like the Wellness, but I thought if it was better for them, I would go with it anyway and mix it with the Orijen which they love and is very high quality. Maybe I will go with the Wysong instead . . . has anyone had more experience with the Wysong Uretic? Thank you.

(I decided against the Evo because the Ash content is higher.)

(60) CJ says:

April 15, 2010 at 1:54 am

My cat was also on Wellness when he got crystals. This was a little over a year ago, and the vet put him on Science Diet C/D for the rest of his life. He hasn't had a reoccurrence of crystals, but I don't like that he's eating so much bad dry food, and he hates canned C/D, which isn't that good anyway. I have been reading this board and that link someone posted earlier, <http://www.catinfo.org>⁶, for awhile now and decided to do the C/D together with Avoderm canned Select Chunks. I don't want to completely take him off the C/D yet because I'm afraid of the crystals returning. I will also be looking into the Wysong Uretic. I just do not like the ingredients in C/D.

(61) Ven says:

April 19, 2010 at 10:03 am

Hi guys, after much research countless antibiotics for urinary infections and surgery for struvite removal we finally cracked it.

Firstly with diagnosis of struvite you need to break down the existing crystals. A pure diet of only breakdown food and filtered water is key. I ecommend Hills Prescription Diet Feline S/D. I found

the best price at a place called viovet. This takes about 6- 10 months to remove any existing problem. We found cystitis was recurrent and we had to keep an eye on her urine with countless courses of antibiotics.

Once she was back to normal (determined by a vet growing a culture from a urine sample) then you can focus on a maintenance diet we found trovet they do 175g wet food and also dry we like to mix both together. Unfortunately there's not much variation in flavour (one flavour) but it works they also make cat treats that are anti struvite which is a bonus. You can find them at a place called the petfood warehouse online.

Trust me when I say this is 'THE' step by step way to handle this problem and we were lucky that our cat was female or we would have lost her to this trail and error scenario.

We would welcome any advice on normal foods that are acceptable such as cooked chicken fish and other meats as we're still unsure if there's ok.

(62) Vicki L. says:

April 20, 2010 at 9:32 pm

My cat Max hadn't had struvite crystals for years until Felidae changed their formula, replacing mostly meat protein with various Grains & removing Glucosamine, Chondroitin & L-carnitine. He was also on salmon Greenies treats. He ended up in emergency with a blockage. First the vet put him on Hills SD for 1 week, followed by Royal Canin & Purina prescription foods. He didn't like any of them. So after much research, I started him on Wellness dry food & Wellness grain-free canned Turkey. After another blockage, I stopped Wellness & fed Hills SD exclusively for a couple weeks, then CD dry & canned alternating with or topped with Wellness Turkey which he loved. But after another hospital visit, the vet insisted he stay on SD for 4 weeks, but I think I was still adding a little Wellness on top. He retested positive & had to stay on SD for 2 more weeks. At that point, I stopped Wellness food altogether & took my other cat off Wellness Core canned also. The vet placed Max on CD dry & canned permanently. He appears to be ok for the past 6 months, although overdue for urine check. But my other cat gets into the CD & has loose stools. So I would like to find a healthier long-term grain-free food that's lower in fat & a little higher in fiber for both cats. But my vet is no help as he insists that high meat protein is bad for Max's kidneys, even though blood tests were ok. Has anyone found such a product yet?

(63) Traci says:

April 22, 2010 at 2:21 pm

This is all very interesting. My 10 year old cat also has struvite stones. She had recurring litter box issues and the vet finally discovered a stone on an xray about 1.5 years ago. She also has an irregular heart beat, so he was reluctant to do any surgical procedure (as am I). She had recurring issues about every 6 months that were treated with anti-inflammatories and increased water intake. 2 weeks ago, we were back again and the stone was still evident on the xrays. He managed to get her to pass one other smaller stone that was sent for analysis and came back struvite. I am still waiting to discuss diet options with him, but am leery of any prescription diets - I HATE the ingredients. But, I had her on Wellness canned Chicken and Turkey flavors and that clearly did not help the situation and from what I'm reading, could have made it worse. I know the vet will suggest s/d or Royal Canin. She has never stomached the Hills prescription diets well and usually starts vomiting after a few days. Anyone have any suggestions for healthier diets?

(64) dionne says:

April 22, 2010 at 8:21 pm

My cat Joe had a long history of FLUTD. He had a PU surgery last month, and has been doing OK since.

He was solely on wet c/d for 2 weeks after surgery. Then I gave him increasing amount of dry c/d as well.

He had severe diarrhea soon after he had dry c/d, and stopped eating at all.

The diarrhea is gone now, but he still won't take any c/d anymore wet or dry. I was, and still am, at a loss for what I should give him. I tried giving him Chicken soup for the cat lover's soul, which he loved for a few days, and he refused after.

He still gets various brands of wet food such as avoderm, natural balance (all of which are non-fish). He seems to like one brand for a little bit of time only. Does anyone know why?

He also loves junk foods. I saw him reaching a hand inside the kitten's cage (they're orphans) for their Pro Plan Kitten. But I usually hide the food somewhere he can't reach.

Any ideas to handle Joe in this problem will be greatly appreciated! I was thinking of trying Taste of The Wild

(65) Carly says:

April 29, 2010 at 11:30 pm

I think people aren't thinking about the fact that everyone who is having problems is feeding their cats DRY cat food. I too use wellness. My lady eats only the wet, but I admit I feed my boy dry for the convenience, as I work all day. I think it is the lack of water (though they have a water fountain) and not the Wellness cat food. My boy has crystals..I just found out yesterday. I've been reading up on this since I found out. I think some cats have a genetic predisposition to FUS. But I still believe in Wellness and stand by their food. Perhaps we should leave the dry food at the pet stores. And we certainly shouldn't use Hill's- the 3rd ingredient is CORN STARCH for god sakes!!! Is that even a real food? Lets not even talk about the by-products. Does anyone have a recommendation for a way to alkaline the food? i know cranberry for the acid, but i cant find the holistic edible alkaline equivelant. Please let me know- thanks!

(66) Brenda says:

May 2, 2010 at 10:12 pm

My cat has suffered from crystals twice. He (and his brother and sister) ate Whiskas dry for years with no problems. The two times he developed crystals were shortly after switching to so-called "healthier" cat foods...you know, the ones with carrots and cranberries and a bunch of other silly things that cats don't need. I can't remember the name of the first food- it was a specialty food from a small pet store, the second time was halfway through a huge bag of Purina Healthful Life. Since his blockage a year and a half ago, I have been feeding him Friskies wet- mainly the chicken flavor because it lists chicken and liver before meat-by-products, so I assume it has more actual meat. He's been doing great on it so far. Knock on wood.

I think the best thing you can do for a cat prone to crystals is to switch to a wet food. I'm so tempted to go back to dry because the wet food smells disgusting, but I'll stick it out if it keeps him healthy.

(67) Anne says:

May 3, 2010 at 10:12 pm

I just brought my 7 year old male cat to the vet for his second blockage in two months. He was diagnosed with struvite crystals last year and I tried the Eukenuba prescription food from the vet but he just got worse (no blockage but blood in the urine and urinating out of the box). After much reading I put him on the Wysong Uretic and Dasuquin (recommended by the vet). I would give him his (Dasuquin) medication with a combination of 100% meat canned food by Before Grain (Merrick) mixed with some chicken broth, Wysong PH- powder and a combination of powdered cranberry, blueberry, marshmallow root and hydrangea root (my own concoction.) He did really well on that combination for the past year and then I messed up... Trying to find a slightly cheaper food and thinking he was doing so well, I thought I would try a cheaper "good quality" food without grains. I switched him to the Felidae dry food and within a month he was blocked. They tested his PH and found it to be a 7.0. This was down .5 from the year prior but still a problem. I switched him back to the Wysong Uretic (the Struvatrol is ridiculously expensive, \$16 for 7 ounces) and he was again doing fine. I took in a urine sample 2-3 weeks

later for good measure and they still found a few crystals and his PH had dropped to 6.5. The vet said this was better but not good enough. I then tried the Hills S/D and two weeks later (today) a new blockage. I am in agreement with my vet that changing back to the Wysong, while it didn't seem to eliminate the crystals completely, did allow him to have a year free of any symptoms. As soon as he is back from the vet in a few days, I will be switching back to Wysong. An expensive lesson just because I wanted to save a little money on cat food.

(68) Reggie says:

May 3, 2010 at 10:32 pm

Wow. I am so glad to find this. My cat had crystals several years ago so the vet prescribed Hills w/d...yes, w/d...I didn't realize this was for diabetes and weight management (neither of which would apply to him) until my cat started disliking this food more and more so I did some research looking for another Hill's flavor for urinary problems. That's when I realized he was eating the wrong food altogether w/d instead of c/d!

So now I know my cat was eating the wrong stuff all along but what do I do now? I'm trying cat foods with low magnesium and ash but am nervous about this. I was trying Wellness but will discontinue.

Also, the higher protein foods seem to making him constipated...

(69) Mary says:

May 4, 2010 at 1:10 pm

My cats are all on Urinary so by Royal Cannin ,have been on it for years and doing great.I also give them a tbls of Science diet cd am and pm.Bo Bo was blocekd 3-4 times and is doing great now.He eats NOTHING else no scraps etc.

(70) Lisa says:

May 5, 2010 at 6:49 pm

I have been feeding my 4 year old cat Innova/EVO for over a year since his last incident. He just had another occurrence of FLUTD and his uring sample showed a PH of 8 with many struvite crystals. I too am concerned about the nutritional value of the prescription diets but am at a loss. He was fed the EVO canned food with just a small amount of dry food. I bought a water fountain as well and even added water to his canned food. Still he has a problem. My vet recommended the Royal Canin SO canned cat food. So, I just want people to know that the Innova/EVO is not always the answer.

(71) Sherlocke says:

May 5, 2010 at 9:12 pm

You should try Royal Canin Urinary — it's WAY better than Science Diet! I think Science Diet smells awful and my cat won't eat it — neither would my mother's cat. I did a lot of research on this, and Royal Canin Urinary is the only one I could find that helps BOTH struvite crystals *and* calcium oxalate crystals. My cat had both. By the way, Wellness is an outstanding food — it's not the Wellness causing the problem. Some cats just have this tendency and will get the problem on any food. My cat used to get them no matter what I fed him — and I tried many things before finding Royal Canin Urinary. On the Royal Canin, this is the longest he has ever gone without having a problem — it's been over a year a half with no issues!! The vet has to order it for you. My vet didn't carry it until I asked him to order it for me — and now he's using it for other patients! Try it out! It smells like real meat and my cat really goes for it.

(72) Lisa says:

May 8, 2010 at 2:26 am

Since I last wrote I have done quite a bit of research and consulting. One person who has a vast amount of experience in caring for cats with FLUTD stressed that I needed to lower the PH and reduce the crystals as soon as possible. The canned food Royal Canin SO was very effective in doing that and my cat would suffer no ill effects if I fed him that for 4-6 months to get things

under control. The book titled "The New Natural Cat" by Anitra Frazier also recommends never feeding dry food (only as a treat and no more than 1 tablespoon a day) and removing food completely between meals. You should feed morning and night but remove any leftover food completely after 45 minutes and remove all dishes except for fresh water. In her book she writes "Recent studies have revealed that every time the cat smells food his urine becomes more alkaline." The more alkaline the urine, the more chances your cat will develop struvite crystals. If you feel uncomfortable about the nutrition value of the prescription diet, one source suggested supplementing with raw organic chicken, preferably chicken legs. Just rinse well and offer about 4 small cubes. You can freeze the chicken in individual packets. I did look into the Wysong Struvetrol (available only by a veterinary prescription) but I only saw that it was available in a dry food which is contrary to what is recommended. Does anyone know if this is offered in a canned food?

(73) Stephnay says:

May 17, 2010 at 10:07 pm

Ok, people- let's use some basic scientific reasoning. Of course there will be a lot of cats having a recurrence of their crystals issues when on the prescription diet. The only cats put on that diet HAVE PROBLEMS WITH CRYSTALS and there is a 50% chance of recurrence. The food doesn't cure the problem, but attempts to control the environment to minimize the problem.

It's like saying that a lot of people on high blood pressure medication have heart attacks.. and then blaming the company that makes the blood pressure medication for the heart attacks. Let's use some common sense, here!!

(74) Lisa says:

May 19, 2010 at 11:25 pm

Update:

My 4 year old cat was diagnosed with "lots" of crystals and a PH of 8 two weeks ago. Here are the changes I made; I began changing his food over to Royal Canin SO beginning with 3 parts old food (which was Innova/EVO) and 1 part SO. Over the 2 weeks I gradually changed to 3 parts SO and 1 part Innova/EVO. I also began to remove food completely between meals and cut down on the dry food. I fed him in the morning and evening and after 45 minutes completely removed the food and cleaned his placemat. I only gave him 2 tablespoons of dry food right before we went to bed and again, took away the dish and wiped down his placemat. I have been gradually changing the dry food to Wysong Uretic. I took a urine sample to my vet 2 weeks later. To my JOY, the PH was 6 and there were NO crystals. I cannot attribute this change strictly to the food as at the time I was still 3 parts SO and 1 part Innova/EVO. The only other change was removing food (and dishes and wiping the placemats clean). Could it be that simple? I urge you to try this. I felt uncomfortable at first not leaving food while I was gone during the day but the readings I did assured me this was worth a try. My friends have dogs and they don't leave food for them during the day, why would we think it necessary for cats? Granted, I spend about 15 more minutes before I leave the house in the morning to clear away the dishes and wipe the placemats but I am happy to do that if it saves me a vet bill and the comfort and life of my cat. As I said, could the solution for many of our pets be removing food between meals as Anita Frazer recommended in her book? It certainly is a simple change and worth a try. I am now researching the canned cat food by Wysong "Vitality" as it is suppose to prevent struvite crystals and be very nutritious. However, I am going to stay with the Royal Canin SO (3 to 1) for awhile. It would be great to hear from any other pet owners of their successes. I do realize my results have been recent but I do find it interesting that my cat's urine tests changed so dramatically in 2 weeks. And, I did purchase the fancy (very pricey) water fountain from my vet. Previously, I had purchased a less expensive one. I have seem my cat drink from it twice in 2 weeks! However, I would always try anything that may help him despite the cost.

(75) GINA says:

May 25, 2010 at 12:43 am

I BELIEVE THE CRYSTALS ARE FORMED FROM DRINKING TAP WATER!!!! TAP WATER HAS ALOT OF MINERALS AND ALOT OF CHEMS.

(76) CF says:

May 25, 2010 at 3:51 pm

Hi again (#59). Just wanted to report great success with the mixture of the Orijen Cat & Kitten Dry Food with the Wysong Uretic dry food — no crystals for a long while now. It is a hit taste-wise too.

Their wet food is Instinct, which is a great GRAIN FREE HIGH FIBER wet food option. They like this wet food better than other wet foods (e.g., Wellness) and needed a higher fiber content due to loose stools (when I had them eating Spot's Stew). I know there are a lot of nutritionists out there saying wet food only or even raw food, but that is not realistic for my cats, as they love their dry food and I work. My vet said some research shows that cats who eat dry food drink more water, so some of that moisture balance works out, and that dry is better for their teeth. I am sticking with the combination of dry and wet food. I do seek out grain free options though as much as possible, and pay attention to the moisture content, ash content, PH balance, minerals, DL-methionine, etc. for urinary issues (cranberries are nice too but found to not be as important for pets as humans).

Again, I don't like the EVO b/c the ash content is higher, and my cats never liked the Wellness taste-wise (dry and wet, although I never tried their Core line of foods). Orijen is another grain free option that is also high in protein — they love the stuff too. I like including the Wysong Uretic b/c even though it has a little grain in it (but not corn), it is specially made for these issues, has a higher moisture content, and more DL-methionine in it.

Thanks — this line of comments has been really helpful.

(77) Karoline says:

May 26, 2010 at 11:49 pm

I am sad to hear that even these special diet cat foods are causing problems as well. I have known of this issue with crystal formations for years. I had one cat that had to have a cath. But it was cruel how it was done due to lack of money so he was not asleep when it was done. (will never go to the SPCA again) Needless to say after the cath was removed the cat ran away never to be seen again. Though I usually have male cats and few females. I have raised my cats on regular diet cats foods. However very low in fish by products. IE no wet foods with fish or dry when possible no fish. I just recently have had two male cats with this crystal issues again. My Siamese was having seizure and so blocked just laying there with his legs in the air. He has since been treated and so had his father who has high ph but not blocked as bad. Also some blood in the urine. I for one have had different opinions from vets. Any were from no cheap house brands to name brand being ok and special diet or no special diets. And after researching now no wet food at all! So which is which and who is right? Hmmp, I think I will try the Purina 1 someone suggested here for urinary track. I still am going to look for other foods as well. I also know that Purina puts out wet for older cats that is low in ash. I would like to add that I also think it just depends on the cats. As some have and some have not had those issues and rare in female cats. I think the trick here is to avoid as much ash, mag and fish by products as possible and that can only be done by the label no matter the brand. I think the FDA needs to crack down on dog and cat food for better labels of all contents and %. Thank you all for your comments!

(78) Katie says:

May 28, 2010 at 5:27 pm

I've posted here before but I would like to recommend going to the website

<http://www.catinfo.org>⁷

Dr. Pierson discusses the right foods to feed a cat who has urinary issues. The one thing I found out from reading the site was sometimes a Ph reading can be false if it is not tested right away. Crystals can form in a cat's urine if not tested within 30 minutes. Both my cats (male and

female) developed a UTI and crystals after being on, believe or not, a raw food diet. My vet put them on Purina One Urinary Health and Purina U/R wet food. Both cats were not fans of the wet so after a lot of research I found out that Weruva is now being recommended by vets because of its high moisture/low ash content. My male loves the Paw Licken Chicken, my female prefers the Wellness Indulgence Pouches. I don't feed them the fish flavors. It's been six months and they are doing quite well. I also add water to their wet food for extra moisture to keep their urinary tract flushed. They get 1/8 cup dry food at night to tide them over. Even though cats should be on a mostly wet or all wet diet, we still can't control genetics and for some breeds, they are more prone to problems.

(79) Rico says:

May 29, 2010 at 2:37 am

A couple of recent posts have focused on the importance of feeding low ash foods to manage a urinary crystal problem. Here is an article written by Dr. Donna Spector that contradicts this contention.

<http://www.halopets.com/pet-education/pet-articles/feline-urinary-problems.html>⁸

She argues the following:

1. Varying the ash content has no effect on urinary crystal development.
2. The most important step to take is increasing daily water intake, preferably using an exclusively canned diet.

She cites a recent one-year controlled clinical study to support the above. She also provides other specific recommendations.

One piece of advice provided, adding water to dry food if the cat refuses canned food, may not be wise. According to Dr. Lisa Pierson at <http://www.catinfo.org>⁹, mixing water and dry food could cause a bacteria problem.

(80) Rico says:

June 3, 2010 at 6:03 pm

Some are concerned about ash content in cat food when trying to manage a feline struvite crystal issue. However, according to one veterinary expert, ash doesn't matter. In this article, <http://www.halopets.com/pet-education/pet-articles/feline-urinary-problems.html>¹⁰, Donna Spector, DVM, seen frequently on Ellen DeGeneres' talk show, argues the following:

1. Varying the ash content of cat food has no effect on crystal formation.
2. The most important step in combating a crystal problem is to increase water intake.

She cites a recent one-year controlled clinical study to support her assertions. She also gives other specific advice. One piece of advice, adding water directly to dry food, may not be wise. According to Lisa Pierson, DVM, at <http://www.catinfo.org>¹¹, doing so could create a bacteria problem because of the way dry food is processed.

(81) Tammy says:

June 9, 2010 at 6:55 am

Hey, I'm from Germany and my cat had struvite, too. He's now completely free of crystals, but without diet food. The vet suggested that my cat should have an urethrostomy right away. But I said no to the surgery. Instead, I read a lot about the disease, contacted people who had experiences with it and found a solution: No more dry food, ever again! Instead I feed him wet food that has a high percentage of meat, e.g. Animonda Carny with 85% meat (but I don't know if you can buy that outside Germany, yet I think that there might be equivalent sorts). I also bought pills called "Prodoca Guardacid". These pills acidulate the urine and regulate the pH-value, which you have to control regularly. My cat gets 2 pills a day at the moment.

The important thing is to control the cat's pH so he doesn't get an overdose of Guardacid. It should be somewhere between 6.0 and 6.5. You can get test sticks at the pharmacy.

After 4 weeks with this kind of therapy, my cat was completely FREE of struvite. Of course I still have to control his pH on a regular basis and he probably has to eat those pills for the rest of his life but otherwise, he is better than ever. Also the pills are not very expensive. 200 Guardacid cost 20 euros, 50 pills cost ca. 8 euros. If anyone wishes to get more info about this, feel free to ask me. I have no idea if you can get the pills outside Europe though.

(82) dawn says:

June 9, 2010 at 4:57 pm

i have just got my cat back from the vet. he had crystals in his bladder due to dry cat food. the vet recommended a certain food that going to cost me a fortune.. i love my cat but i cant afford these prices.. any ideas?? thanks.

(83) Lisa says:

June 9, 2010 at 6:54 pm

Just wanted to share that I picked up a magazine in my local coop store called "Feline Wellness". It had an article on FLUTD. In it they recommed a supplement called "Deserving Pets". It is a vitamin supplement that contains ingredients such as cranberry, milk thistle, and dandelion that help prevent crystals and stones and promote urination. It is a little expensive. However, I try to keep in mind that preventive measures are much cheaper in the long run than the bills from the vet!

In response to Dawn, as everyone has found from research, switch your cat to a high quality canned food and add water to their diet. The websites mentioned above by others are very helpful.

(84) Tammy says:

June 10, 2010 at 5:51 am

@Dawn

As I said, go buy wet food with a high percentage of meat. A lot of canned food only consists of 4% meat. The food I use has up to 85% meat or even 100% fish. Then, mix it with as much water as possible (as long as your cat eats it, there can never be enough water). And then search the net for PRODOCA GUARDACID and see if u can get it somewhere. These pills worked the magic on my cat. As I mentioned, he almost DIED because he had too much struvite in his bladder and vets said he HAD to have his penis amputated. But 4 weeks of giving him 3 Guardacid a day mixed with the food were enough. He is now completely healthy. In Germany, you can get the pills in every pharmacy. You can also order them from online pharmacies. And 200 pills only cost 20 euros or so. That means you only have to buy them every 2 or three months depending how many your cat would need a day. Yes, I have to control his pH on a regular basis and he'll have to get those pills for the rest of his life but it could be way worse. Where are you located? US? I don't know if Guardacid is available there. Ask your vet for the pills. Or maybe an equivalent product, meaning pills with DL-Methionine.

(85) Deep Search says:

June 13, 2010 at 8:01 pm

Okay my male long hair cat has been on Weruva Paw Lickin' Chicken for several months now after being on the Hill's Prescription diet for urine crystals. So far he has done well on it and hasn't had any relapses. It did take him a little while for him to get used to it as the Weruva chicken is finely shredded, not minced, so I had to mix it with the vet's canned food at first. He still gets some dry food (as our other cats eat it) but only a few bites a day, if that. He also has a pet water fountain bowl and he gets a capsule of cosequin every other day (to reduce inflammation) and we keep him as stress-free as possible.

I can get Weruva on Amazon with free shipping and it costs slightly less than the vet prescribed food and it's delivered right to our door.

(86) Lydia says:

June 28, 2010 at 5:38 pm

Here's a suggestion. Stop feeding your cats dry food! It's the worse thing you can do to a cat. Start changing them over to high quality canned foods or better yet, the raw food diet plan. You'll be saving kitty and not funneling all your money into the vet's office.

(87) Susan Drake says:

July 1, 2010 at 9:20 pm

I had an Abyssinian cat that suffered from struvite crystals. Since I had 10 other cats, special "expensive" food was not an good option as I free feed and did not want to have to cage her. I asked for a pill that would acidify her urine and was told there was a pill called Uroese. She took 1 pill a day for the remainder of her life (about 6 years) and never had a recurrence of the struvite crystals and her urine stayed slightly acidic. It was an inexpensive and effective solution.

(88) Sophie says:

July 8, 2010 at 11:22 am

My cat has been on Royal Canin Urinary S/O for over 6 years now. I've tried to get him on high quality organic wet food and I've also tried the raw diet (supposed to be a natural way of feeding). But he always gets the crystals back. After 1 week back on Royal Canin Urinary S/O (he hates the wet but I insist), his urine is without crystals. I would much prefer to feed him better food (I also think that removing magnesium cannot be good in the long run) but he has only done well on the special diet. Be careful if you test other methods as your cats could die of a blockage.

(89) Rico says:

July 12, 2010 at 10:50 pm

Follow up to posts 37, 41, 51, 53, 79, 80.

My cat has had a recent setback. He had been crystal free from the beginning of this year through late February, while on a diet consisting exclusively of Innova EVO Cat & Kitten canned. Although he continues to show no litter pan symptoms, his urine test last week showed crystals with a pH of 7.5, which is alkaline. His February test showed no crystals with a pH of 7.0, which is still borderline high. Lately, I'd been mixing distilled water with his food and I will continue to do that. However, after further discussion with my vet, we have decided to supplement his EVO with the prescription IAMS low pH canned food, probably half and half or so. While it is certainly possible that the stress of the trip to the vet caused a pH rise, I'm not willing to roll the dice by making no adjustments. After examining the ingredients of this particular IAMS food, I've decided that while they are not ideal, they are acceptable given his condition. Let's look at the first several ingredients of the three leading prescription canned foods:

Hill's CD Chicken:

Pork By-Products, Water, Pork Liver, Chicken, Rice, Corn Starch, Oat Fiber, Chicken Fat, Fish Meal, Corn Gluten Meal, Chicken Liver Flavor

Carbohydrate % of calories: 22% (source: Janet & Binky's canned cat food website <http://binkyspage.tripod.com/CanFoodNew.html>¹²)

Royal Canin Urinary SO:

Water sufficient for processing, chicken, chicken liver, pork liver, pork by products, corn flour, fish oil, powdered cellulose, dried egg product, vegetable oil

Carbohydrate % of calories: 18% (source: Royal Canin website .pdf file which I can no longer retrieve)

IAMS (formerly Eukanuba) Urinary-S - Low pH/S:

Chicken Broth, Chicken Liver, Chicken, Brewer's Rice, Whitefish, Chicken By-Product Meal, Dried Egg Product, Dried Beet Pulp

Carbohydrate % of calories: 12% (source: Janet & Binky's canned cat food website <http://binkyspage.tripod.com/CanFoodNew.html>¹³)

If you apply a grain free, low carb, no by-product standard, none of these meets that criteria. However, I believe IAMS is the best of the 3, beating out Royal Canin due to the lower carbohydrate content. 12% of calories is higher than I would like, but should be moderate enough to prevent weight gain, especially if mixed with the EVO. And the by-product ingredient is way down the list (ingredients are listed in order from largest to smallest content). By comparison, CD has a by-product as the first ingredient.

(90) Rico De Felice says:

July 14, 2010 at 3:33 am

In Post 89 I provided an incorrect link to Janet & Binky's canned cat food nutritional page. The correct link is

<http://binkyspage.tripod.com/CanFoodNew.html>¹⁴

I believe this is a very good tool to use in evaluating canned cat food. Please note I did not use this page as the source for the carbohydrate content of Royal Canin Urinary SO because the company has since changed the formula.

(91) Laura says:

July 14, 2010 at 5:11 pm

I found this forum thread after taking my male cat to the vet today and discovering he has struvite crystals. Luckily, his kidney values are good.

I have also had two female cats to the vet in the past month with cystitis.

And I found it disturbing to read post after post – cats eating Wellness.

Guess what my cats are eating? Wellness Core. I'm so upset to think that this food that I thought was one of the best ones available might be contributing to this. I realize it could be other factors, but too many people on this forum have mentioned Wellness for me not to consider taking all my cats off it.

Of course, the vet is recommending the Science Diet special food, and I absolutely detest the crap that SD puts in their dry foods!

Thank you to those who have given info on Innova EVO – I'm going to look into that.

The vet also suggested using distilled water, so I might give that a try.

(92) Lisa says:

July 14, 2010 at 6:19 pm

I have been successful with my cat using a combination of the Royal Canin SO and Innova/EVO. Recently, I have switched to Merrick Before Grain as my cat needs to lose some weight and the Merrick has less calories and fat than the EVO. Right now he is eating half Royal SO and half Merrick. He is also on "Vital Vitamins" and I am removing food between meals. He gets 2 tablespoons of the Wysong Uretic before bed. My vet highly recommended the Royal SO as it actually dissolves the crystals and the other brands do not. In her experience, it is also the brand that has been most successful in her practice.

(93) Rico says:

July 14, 2010 at 9:49 pm

Regarding Royal Canin Urinary SO vs. IAMS Urinary-S – Low pH/S, I have two goals in mind.

1. Getting my cat's pH down, so crystals won't form in the urine.
2. Keeping the carb content to a minimum. My cat used to weigh 16.5 pounds a year and a half ago. I put him on a low carb diet, eventually all canned, and he's now 12.4 pounds. I believe I've potentially added many years to his life by taking the weight off.

I really don't know which of the two foods will be more effective in preventing crystals. I do know that IAMS is lower in carbs, so that's the main reason I'm going with it.

(94) Lisa says:

July 19, 2010 at 6:32 pm

I have read that you should avoid any fish flavored foods for cats with FLUTD. Anybody have any thoughts? I have noticed that some of the better quality foods offer canned food with fish such as Merrick. Just wondering if anybody else has read to avoid fish and if anyone knows why.

(95) Georgina says:

July 22, 2010 at 8:39 pm

Im so glad I found this website. my cat was at the vet for the third time now. he didnt have any problems for 3years but now its back again(we believe its cause by change of enviroment) and he had to spend 4days in the vet clinic.

I find it really hard to talk to any Vet about the best treatment esp. longterm. they all just recommend the perscription diet and if I ask which one works better or has the better ingredients I cant get a straight answer.

I mentioned to the vet today about those tablets given with non-perscription high quality grain free food and the answer I got is that there are other options of food(grainfree, homecooked...) that might be good but companies like hills and royal canine have lots of years experience and they know what ingredients mixed well together work the best and she wouldnt recommend experimenting too much as it could bring back the stones.

i think thats what makes these companies so successful and they dont use the best ingredients. nobody wants to see their pet suffering so the easiest way is to put all the hopes into the perscription diet for life

@Lisa: I never heard about the problem with fish.
maybe its higher in magnesium?

all i know is that my cat LOVES the hills cd ocean fish(wouldnt eat the chicken) but he keeps asking for more all day. the vet told me its because he just likes it so much but I have a feeling it doesnt fill him and hes always hungry although he's putting on a lot of weight
its a desperate situation

(96) Michelle says:

July 23, 2010 at 12:19 pm

Ive been feeding my cat medical preventive and it seems to work but i don't like how much it costs.

Georgine, my cat asks for more all day too. i just give him 1/3 of a cup a day but he drives me nuts when its finished. and i cant feed him more because he gets fat or pukes it up.

(97) Georgina says:

July 23, 2010 at 7:00 pm

By cat medical preventive do you mean foods like hills cd and royal canin? or is that something different?

i was thinking of trying royal canin instead of the cd when he comes off the sd, but im even scared switching brands in case the crystals come back

(98) Katie says:

August 3, 2010 at 11:55 pm

Hi Lisa and Georgina-

Fish is not a good food to feed cats, whether they have urinary issues or not. Cats by nature are meant to eat meat, therefore their systems are unable to handle an overload of fish. Fish also has high contents of magnesium, phosphorus and calcium which can lead to crystals, stones, etc. Weruva has fish flavors that have pretty low percentages of these minerals but even the founder of the company says it's not a good idea to feed fish to cats every day. I feed my two cats Weruva's Paw Licken Chicken and Wellness pouches in the chicken, turkey, and duck flavors.

They get a fish meal only one day a week and it's typically Weruva's Mediterranean Harvest, which has the lowest percentages of their fish flavors. They also get 1/8 cup of Purina One Urinary Health every day. I hate the ingredients in the Purina but they are doing well on this diet so I'm not going to mess with it.

(99) Laura says:

August 9, 2010 at 1:05 pm

I'm shocked at all the problems people have had on Wellness! I'd never heard anything so negative about their food.

My cat is almost a year and a half old. He was on Innova EVO Chicken & Turkey (dry) for most of his life, then switched to Natural Balance Green Pea & Chicken when EVO got a little too pricey at my local petstore. He liked it just as much, but a couple months later he developed struvite crystals and bacteria, although his urine was still acidic. He was on antibiotics for 10 days and seemed better, but when I took him back to the vet they said he had calcium oxylate crystals! I understand that this is at least less dangerous than the struvite crystals, but his urine was alkaline, which can help more crystals form. I think he may be predisposed to getting crystals, but I'm afraid the higher magnesium content of Natural Balance (0.16%) paired with the stress of moving probably helped. So the doctor sent me home with Hill's c/d which seemed gross, but I was desperate.

He's been on the diet now for a week. I'm still mixing Hills with Natural Balance to encourage him to eat, as he seems very reluctant to eat the new food. The vet told me to use it for at least a month, and consider using it in the long term. There's no way I can do that. I hope to God that Hill's is doing something to clear out his current bladder problems, but it's not doing anything nutritionally for the rest of him. It's already giving him a slight case of diarrhea, which smells 100x worse than his feces before. He's incredibly gassy. He's always been a pretty cat, silky smooth and smelling like me if anything. How he smells like Hills, which smells AWFUL. And he's just not eating enough- less than a combined cup a day. He's a 16 pound cat (a bit chunky, for sure, but not obese. He's just a biiig cat) and I'm sure he should be eating more. Even if he does learn to like Hills, wouldn't the carbs and sketchy ingredients just make him fatter and screw up his sensitive digestion?

He LOVES water. He always seemed to drink plenty, but in light of his problems I decided to spoil him with a Petmate FreshFlow fountain, which he adores. I highly recommend it.

Opinions, please:

1. Could the sudden alkalinity of his urine have been caused by stress? His urinalysis was taken a few days after we moved into a new environment and away from his only cat playmate.
2. What foods can I use to maintain a good pH in his urine?preferably dry, sorry, he's grown to have zero interest in wet food, but he drinks so much that doesn't worry me.
3. How is Hills going to affect his weight? Before the UTI I was planning on switching him to a weight-loss formula of either Wellness or Natural Balance...neither seem a good idea now.

(100) Lisa says:

August 10, 2010 at 6:09 pm

Laura, if you have to choose a dry food, from all that I have read and researched the Wysong Uretic is a good choice. I switched my cat from Innova/EVO dry to the Wysong with no problem. However, he only gets 2 tablespoons a night.

(101) MKat says:

August 15, 2010 at 10:44 pm

I notice a lot of cats having problems with Struvite crystals while eating the Wellness Core food. One of our cats, too, has had this problem.

Thing is, she simply does not drink much water when she eats the grain free diet. Could it be that the unhealthy grains in some foods trigger thirst, while the healthier food does not? When

we repeatedly tested the pH of her urine, we discovered that it was not especially alkaline while eating the Core food. In fact, it was mildly acidic.

We've solved our problem by adding two fountains (one stainless steel and one ceramic, since our cat did not care for the plastic one) and by increasing the amount of wet food that she is fed while decreasing the dry food to no more than 1/2 cup total daily.

It has worked like a charm – now that she is better hydrated, the crystals are no more.

This leads me to believe that the "problem" with the grain-free Wellness food is not nutritional (magnesium content, etc.), but rather linked to some cats' lessened thirst while on the product.

(102) lisa says:

August 17, 2010 at 10:11 pm

Laura, I have written before that I have been successful feeding my cat 1/2 prescription food (Royal Canin S0) and half Merrick Before Grain. I am now trying 1 part SO and 3 parts Merrick. I think sometimes you have to do both, the vet prescribed food and the food you feel is good for your cat. Maybe we have to conclude that it is not one food or the other but maybe a combination of the both. I feel good that my cat is getting the prescription food that keeps him free of crystals but is also getting a good portion of the high protein, high quality cat food that I know he needs for ongoing good health. I am also going to look into the ceramic water fountain that was suggested as I don't see my boy drinking out of the Platinum Deluxe Water Fountain that my vet recommended. It is getting expensive trying to find the right thing to get him to drink more water. I wonder why if it is so critical for cats to drink water WHY they are not inclined to do so and WHY NOW are we seeing more of our pets prone to this problem. Is it the quality of our water? If so, why then when I fill the water fountain with distilled water that I purchased still not appealing to him? And please, don't mention dry food as the culprit as I have been seriously limiting that from my cats diets for some time.

(103) Rico says:

August 18, 2010 at 8:53 pm

Lisa, I am facing the same issue with my cats. Over a month ago I bought a Petmate Deluxe Fresh Flow fountain. I still have yet to witness either of my two cats drink from it. Of course, my cats are on an all canned diet mixed with added distilled water. So their diet is about 80% water as it is. Cats evolved as desert creatures and have a very low thirst drive. However, cats will drink a lot of water when on a dry food diet, since dry food is only about 5% to 10% water. I'd be willing to bet my next paycheck that my cats would drink out of their fountain if I switched them to dry food, which I would never do.

(104) Kristin says:

August 19, 2010 at 6:04 pm

I am glad to have found the discussions here! My 5 year old cat a year ago came up with acute FUS symptoms, and once that episode was defused I made diet changes to eliminate fish completely [he'd eat that daily if allowed] and restrict dry food to a treat. He's been getting Fancy Feast Medleys turkey and chicken fare, and Purina ProPlan chicken & beef canned food; dry food was restricted to Organix or Wellness mixed as a teaspoonful into wet food once a day, until recently. He loves his dry food, so I started letting him have a little more with every meal. Then I was away for a weekend, dry food had to be left for free feeding. The Monday after he was in serious discomfort with a urinary plug he actually managed to pass. I am sure it was building for a while, but that weekend may have put matters over the top. This time the vet could identify that he has struvite crystals, which are almost certainly still part of his urinary tract profile even though he is not showing any discomfort now. The vet [whom I do like and trust] wants me to feed exclusively Hills SD for a month to clear residual crystals, then keep the cat on a low magnesium canned diet. I have the same concerns as others here about the food choice: Hills SD may be designed to eliminate the residue crystals, but it also has filler grains and by-product meal which I prefer to eliminate entirely from the cat's diet! Science Diet under normal circumstances is one of my very last choices for a food! Plan to check out some of the

canned foods others have recommended here that are new to me.

Thanks for all the observations and case details – it really helps to compare notes!

(105) Son says:

August 24, 2010 at 11:47 pm

Hi Everyone,

4yrs ago I adopted a brother & sister from the same litter. At the time I also had a 3 year old female. The 3yr old female has had crystal problems. The vet told me to separate the kitten food from the "special" science diet urinary food. OK, that didn't work. They were all eating each others food. After being really frustrated with this, I did some on-line researching and I found something. I purchased dry cat food called "Orijen". It has been 4 years and all three cats are very healthy and happy. The best thing is that my (now) 7 year old has never gotten crystals again and neither have the "kittens". It may not be a cure all for everyone, but it's a miracle food for my cats. Oh, by the way I've had to spend a little more for their food, but I'd rather do that than give it to the vet. I hope that helps if anyone is looking for a good dry cat food. :0) Hug Your Kitties!

(106) Katie says:

August 26, 2010 at 10:33 pm

Many dry cat foods, such as Iams, Science Diet and Purina have added salt which will increase a cat's thirst drive. The healthier foods, such as Wellness, do not have salt. Any cat who is put on a prescription diet for urinary problems is most likely eating a food that has added sodium so the cat will drink more. The best thing is to put the cat on a wet diet, but as we all know, cats can be stubborn creatures and may not care for wet food if they've been fed dry their whole life. Not to mention that wet food can be expensive. I spend about \$70 every 2 weeks on wet food for my cats, but I tell myself I am saving on vet bills in the long run.

(107) LD says:

August 31, 2010 at 4:03 pm

I have noticed that everyone has cats dealing with Struvite crystals and have been feeding Wellness. First off The cat needs to be fed high protein (Animal Base), low Carbohydrate and on grain diet especially rice. Wellness is an ok food but it has grains. And after doing ash comparisons with C/D and wellness indoor, they are pretty much the same when you do the dry matter calculations.

The most important thing is to feed more wet, encourage more water consumption, feed more frequent meals (smaller)

Also some cats have hereditary predisposition to crystals. In the vet formulas they add high amount of salts to increase drinking... a better way is to add water to their wet food as well as feeding only fresh filtered water which is a healthier way to encourage drinking.

The main thing is to get the cat to empty it's bladder more frequently so the concentration of the urine is lower and is not sitting in the bladder longer.

There is also oxalate ,urate crystals that require a different treatment but either way MORE WATER and MORE WET FOOD will help

(108) LD says:

August 31, 2010 at 4:10 pm

The problem why cats do not drink as much as they should is because their bodies are set up to eat raw, fresh kill. It is proven that cats can get all of their nutritional needs from a mouse and a bird. Because of these fresh kills they would get all of their water content. This is why wet food is more highly recommended to mimic their prey.

(109) Rico says:

August 31, 2010 at 9:17 pm

Many of the Wellness canned varieties are grain free. These do contain fruits and vegetables but

are low in carbohydrates (less than 10% of calories). But the protein content is not very high, coming in around the 30% range, and fat is high at above 60%. Ideally, you'd want the protein higher and the fat a bit lower.

See Janet & Binky's canned cat food page, <http://binkyspage.tripod.com/CanFoodNew.html>¹⁵

Both of the Wellness Core canned entries are grain free and a small amount of the fat calories are replaced with protein calories (a few percentage points).

(110) Georgina says:

September 16, 2010 at 10:14 pm

Just wondering if anyone has experience with Applaws?

http://mpmproducts.co.uk/applaws_cat_product_information.asp?in_section=applaws¹⁶

Im feeding the chicken cans every evening to one of my cats and would love to give it to my other cat that is suffering from struvite crystals. he was getting the fish cans before his last blockage and im not sure if it was the food or a stress factor that caused it. i just switched him back to cd after getting sd for 2 months. i hate feeding him all that crap and he put on weight again, but im afraid his crystals will come back

(111) Foster Mom says:

October 9, 2010 at 12:19 am

Taking care of a 4 y/o big yellow male. He's a very calm, easy going cat so I wonder about the stress factor.

I asked a friend who used to work at Hill's what he knew and the first question he asked me was if the cat was fat. He is. The friend said that is the biggest risk factor – just like when people are overweight it is just as bad for a cat. He also said they need to drink alot of water and keep the urine ph in the correct range.

I've read on other forums to put chicken or beef broth in the drinking water to entice them to drink. My old female likes the regular canned foods with gravy and this guy loves the broth. I poor it over his regular Wellness Grain Free canned food and warm it all in the microwave. I bought the reduced sodium broth, but wonder if that is necessary considering some of the other comments above about the prescription diets having a lot of salt in them so the cats will drink more water.

One of the other fosters in the group owns a cat with this problem and said she did alot of research on it. She said the regular Wellness canned grain free works great. She also said whatever food you pick, Magnesium should be under .10% Ash should be low and that she hadn't seen a recommended target percentage but after checking several different brands she said under 3% is a good start. Corn and corn gluten are HUGE no-no's. No fish foods.

I think the water tips I read above are probably good ones.

The previous foster's vet had the cat on Royal Canin OS canned and said the cat should eat no more than a third of his diet in dry food if we decided to feed him some dry. That vet also preferred that feedings be three times a day. I guess since the feedings are wet, this keeps his bladder working if he is fed three times a day? Paws crossed he stays well.

(112) Rico says:

October 9, 2010 at 4:04 pm

I had been adding bottled distilled water to my cat's wet food for a few months. Recently, I changed to bottled spring water, which I had been using earlier. I decided to make the change due to the controversy over the long term effects of distilled water on the bodies of humans and animals. Some believe it greatly improves health. Others believe it results in mineral deficiency and puts the body in an acidic state, which can cause a variety of diseases. There is a lot of information on the internet about this controversy for those who wish to learn more about it.

I don't know who is right in this argument, but I prefer not to gamble on the answer.

(113) Fiona MacMillan says:

October 13, 2010 at 3:29 pm

My cat died because of struvite crystals. I later found veterinary research which shows it is feeding dry food that is causing it since dry food is loaded with carbohydrate which alkalises the urine and in alkaline urine struvite crystals can form and stop the cat passing urine. It is vital that a cat with struvite crystals is taken off dry food forever. The National Research Council's Nutritional Guidelines for Cats and Dogs actually admit that dry food is the cause of struvite crystals. Vets fail to tell clients to take their cat off all dry food but this is the only way to save the cat's life. I now have a campaign aimed at getting a stop to pets being fed dry food because as Dr. Kathy Sinning DVM said in a letter in the JAVMA it is preposterous that pets are being fed dry food and as far away from what they are meant to be fed as one can possibly get. She said it is the complete opposite of what Mother Nature meant the cats to be fed. Raw fed cats would not get struvite crystals because raw food would naturally acidify their urine. Perhaps you would like to look at the website of Dr. Lisa Pierson DVM where she says that dry food is the cause of bladder problems in cats and I have veterinary research which shows dry food also causes cystitis, diabetes, ibd, calcium oxylate stones in the kidneys and dilated cardiomyopathy. I urge you all to save your cat's life please take it off dry food. Do not feed it Hills or any dry food even if it is prescription dry food because they are all bad and are the cause of serious and even fatal bladder problems in cats.

(114) mariloulav says:

October 13, 2010 at 10:28 pm

to dublin's dad

My cat developed struvite crystals. I was prescribed dissolution food for a month or so and then they recommended me t/d. I just followed what the vet prescribed — nothing else than t/d.

A year later my cat suffers from a blockage and needs emergency care. That's when I learn t/d is teeth diet and doesn't really prevent urinary blockage.

Two years later, my cat has been on a diet and on urinary s/o since then and he has crystals again so....

In conclusion, vets don't hold the truth! In my opinion, it's better to make your own research

(115) Georgina says:

October 15, 2010 at 9:23 pm

Have to agree. the only thing my vet tells me to do is feed the hills dry food sd and cd. I was at the vet with my two cats this week to get their teeth cleaned and they told me to make sure i feed dry food!

every time i try and question them about alternatives i get the same answer: keep feeding dry hills. i wonder is it lack in knowledge or they just want to sell their own products

we figured our kitty seems to develop stones when theres change in the inveroment(moved house and got new pets) so i got the feliway diffuser. i have to say it seems to work really well.

kitty is much happier and i hope it help with his bladderstones too

does anyone know about applaws or orijen. would these foods be safe to feed?

(116) Georgina says:

October 15, 2010 at 9:28 pm

some of you wrote that you add water to the food. i started doing this after the last vet visit but im not sure if its really safe. is there any chance that the urin turns TOO acidic when adding extra water to the perscription food?

(117) Maureen says:

October 16, 2010 at 9:03 am

Hi! My cat had struvite stones and needed surgery to remove them four years ago. I tried many different things and with varying success. What I'm doing now that works:

morning meal: Royal Canine canned Control formula (can be ordered online and shipped, need doc strip, which they keep on file so don't need to provide each time ordered)

1 tsp of dry food (Wysong Uretic) over top with 3 Tbs water poured over all

evening meal: 1 Tbs of dry food (Wysong Uretic) with 1 Tbs water poured over.

Sometimes: give him raw beef, which he loves, a little ham, cooked chicken, etc.

Keep in mind: I don't like ingredients in the prescription canned, but it works, and nothing is worth going through what my cat went through before. I love Wysong products in general and feel this company has the best interest of the animal in mind.

Must get water into the animal and the only way I could do this was by adding water to the food (I know, some might say bacteria grows if water is put on dry food, but I only use a little dry and it is eaten immediately, doesn't sit around)

VERY IMPORTANT: to those of you who switch cat food all the time, the very changing of food can cause urinary problems. I found this out, don't do it anymore, if he refuses to eat it at some point, then I'll worry about changing. I sooo want him to have some variety in his food and can't bear the thought of eating the same thing everyday, but cats do better with a consistent diet.

(118) AdamR says:

October 19, 2010 at 5:16 pm

Great comments and conversation, it's so great finding other cat geeks who are so concerned about their cats. I see a lot of Wellness hating here, and from my experience, it's not the food as much as it is the cat. We have two boys, both treated the same (very well, of course), same diet, same everything. One developed crystals, the other hasn't. We put the crystal kitty on Prescription C/D, and he's been 100% crystal free the whole time. We have other 'normal' food for the other cat, and he's crystal free too. Just the luck of the draw.

(119) Rico says:

October 20, 2010 at 12:33 am

Georgina,

It's possible that distilled water might make the urine more acidic, but my cat tested alkaline (urine pH of 7.5) while on it. He wasn't on prescription food at the time. But if you're using other types of water that aren't as acidic, such as most brands of bottled spring water, this shouldn't be a concern. The added water should dilute the urine, making crystal formation less likely. I would also recommend you find a way to at least partially switch your cats to canned food. Hill's, Royal Canin, and Iams each have canned options for their prescription diets. If your vet refuses to go along, perhaps it's time to find a new vet.

(120) Georgina says:

October 20, 2010 at 6:57 pm

Rico,

thanks for the reply. I feed my cats twice a day small portions of dry food and wet food in the evening.

im lucky enough that both cats eat everything, not fussy at all.

kitty is on cd and i started adding some water to two of his meals. i live in ireland and can only get hills or royal canin for this problem. i hate hills cd so i started adding a little of orijen to his dry just to give him some better quality food, even if its just a small amount.

i read on orijens website that its good for bladder health because the high protein content and the cranberry make the urine acidic in a natural way. i will keep a close eye on kitty and hope he gets on with it. he seems to love it anyway

regarding the vet there is not much choice in the area and im already going to the better one.

hope i wont have to visit any of them anytime soon.

have to say this website is way more helpful than any vet i was talking to.

(121) Abby says:

October 25, 2010 at 10:16 pm

Wow...this has been eye-opening! My one cat had crystals some years ago...can't remember what I was feeding at the time, but yes, it was dry. After his stay at the vet's I was told to use the prescription food Dissolution and then the preventative food. I didn't believe in all that, did my research and once the cat was home I started feeding raw. Well, he was right back in the vet with a blockage way worse than the first time! I used the Medi-cal/Royal Canin Dissolution and then switched to the Preventative as recommended. He blocked again! He is so scarred now that he will die if he blocks again as they cannot get a catheter in him again. He has been on the Dissolution for many years now and has been doing fine. Now I find out that they are not making the Dissolution any more and I am not sure what to feed. I cannot 'experiment' as one more time and he is dead. The vet is now recommending I use the Hills prescription diet and I will try it...although I am not overly impressed by the comments so far. A different vet said my cat would be OK on the Urinary S/O but I was too afraid to try since we were doing so well on Dissolution. And I see that one person's cat did block again on the S/O. This seems to be a huge problem in cats.

(122) Georgina says:

October 27, 2010 at 7:37 pm

Abby

there is a royal canin s/o high dilution which i believe would be the same as hills s/d. its only fed for a few weeks to dissolve the stones and than you switch to s/o or hills c/d.
did the vet ever suggest surgery? i was told it would be a solution in the worst case. my vet told me he performed it on lots of cats with good success rate.

(123) Abby says:

October 29, 2010 at 1:25 pm

Thanks Georgina,

After the last block my vet did say that we could do surgery. However, as much as I love my cat, I am on a limited income and \$1200 for a 14 year old cat seems unfeasible.

I was also told that the Dissolution was only supposed to be fed until we returned to normal, however because the cat reblocked on a preventative food, the vet recommended the Dissolution long term.

A second vet said I was doing more harm than good on the Dissolution long term, however this cat has been on it for years now and looks and acts incredibly healthy...healthier than the other cats I have of his age.

I have a call out to another vet again but she is off until Wednesday, so I will see what she recommends.

(124) Lucious says:

October 29, 2010 at 6:07 pm

I find it interesting that alot of you make a correlation between Wellness food and the formation of crystals in your cat's blader.

At least when it comes to humans, eating a healthy diet makes our bodies more alkaline. Eating crap makes our body's pH go lower (therefore more acidic). Now crystals and other mineral-type of formations desolve in acidic medium, that's a fact. However low body pH ecourages various deseases — including cancer.

If Wellness is loaded with good things for the cats bodies.. I wonder if their pH balance works the same as it does for humans. .if that's the case, feeding a cat the vet-recommended diet for this particular problem, is simply desolving the crystals by lowering the cat's body pH.. and if the cat's body responds to pH the same as ours, this low pH might not be good for the cat's overall health.

It should be noted that science by its very nature is "one-eyed" . A cardiologist might discover that moderate alcohol consumption is good for blood circulation. But the fact remains that alcohol

is always bad for the liver and kidneys — a finding that would be done by a different kind of doctor.

(125) Rico says:

October 29, 2010 at 11:15 pm

Unlike humans, cats are carnivores. They have little to no dietary need for carbohydrates. A diet high in meat content and low in carbohydrates is appropriate for them. Such a diet produces a slightly acidic urine in normal cats. However, some cats produce an alkaline urine even on a feline appropriate diet. My cat produced an alkaline urine while on Wellness and Wellness Core canned, and Wellness Core Dry. After some initial success, he again produced alkaline urine on Innova EVO Turkey & Chicken canned. All of these foods contain about 5% carbohydrate calories, which is very low. The major prescription maintenance diets (Hills, Royal Canin, IAMS) attempt to acidify the urine by adding acidifiers to the food, such as dl-methionine. These diets restrict magnesium, calcium, and phosphorus, the minerals that comprise struvite crystals. And they also add salt to entice the cat to drink more. Long term, all of these features, combined with less than ideal food ingredients, can lead to health problems. But from what I've read, these diets are generally effective in preventing struvite crystals from forming.

(126) Cat Lover says:

October 31, 2010 at 7:59 pm

My male cat had struvites off and on for some time starting around age 2. He is now 9 1/2 years old. After a number of visits to the vet for blockage, I kept him on the Hills CD after he was unblocked as the doctor requested. I have many cats so even though you feed them separate, he would still find a way to find a little of their food. The Vet also told me to give him the Prescription SD to dissolve the crystals for a few weeks only, but the cat hated that food. Finally I did research and asked the Vet if there was another brand to get for him, which they should have told me before. I was told there are several different diets for this. I found the best one, for my cat, is the Royal Canin SO dry and also the small cans, morsels (he wasn't crazy for the larger cans as they are pate type). He does very well with this food and likes it. I sometimes for variety will give him some Hills CD dry as he never cared much for it (now he likes a little of it) and just refused the SD. It is a little more expensive than the Hills and they don't give out coupons, but it pays not to have to rush him to the hospital on Sunday morning when you cannot get your Vet (even expensive at regular vet) and have him go through this. It might not work for everyone, but he is the only one in the litter that has struvites. Plus it is okay for the others to eat it the SO, but not the SD. The SO is sort of a combo of CD and SD by Hills. Hills CD prevents crystals and SD breaks them up. Royal Canin SO does both. Hope this helps!

(127) Kat says:

November 3, 2010 at 10:48 pm

Was reading here because my 8-year-old male cat just got back from the vet, has struvite crystals, not blocked but going to the box constantly and straining. I have four male cats and have had them all on a 50/50 mix of Taste of the Wild dry and Natural Balance Ultra Premium dry, with 1/4 of a can of Friskies canned food at night. Vet put him on Hill's C/D which is awful food and very expensive. I have no idea what to do, how do you feed 1 cat a different food than the other 3 get? And if high protein/grain free premium dry food causes struvite crystals, what hope is there?

(128) Georgina says:

November 4, 2010 at 4:55 pm

kat,

sorry to hear about your cat.

i wouldnt say its the premium food that caused the problem, more the fact of the food being dry food or other enviromental changes. was there anything new happening? new food, pet, catlitter or any stressful situations? i found thats what triggers problems with my kitty.

about the feeding: cd wont cause any harm to your other cats if they happen to eat some of it. its not a great food but thats what my cat gets too as im too scared to take him off it (although he gets some orijen and water mixed into the dry in the morning and the wet version of the cd in the evenings).

i started feeding my cats in separate rooms when kitty had to get the hills s/d and thought it was a bit a hassle but they got so used to eat in the separate rooms that now i dont even have to close the doors anymore. they even seem to be more relaxed because they have their own space.

i also stopped leaving out food during the day. they eat 3 small portions a day, i take away the bowls when theyre finished and it works perfectly fine.

try it out for a week, they should adapt soon to the new routine

like already suggested in many posts here try to add some water to the food, reduce the dry food and if possible have 3 feeding times a day

hope your cat is feeling better soon

(129) gary vest says:

November 13, 2010 at 12:44 am

The major cause of crystals in cat urine is grain in their food. Most all cat foods are too high in carbs and grains. Look for something with meat as the primary protein source. void

(130) James says:

December 5, 2010 at 7:51 pm

What worked for Us:

My healthy lean male cat of 3 years started showing signs of serious bladder blockage just a few days ago. We have fed him a mix of newman's own organic cat food half dry/ half wet, but he is a crunchy food addict so would eat mostly the dry and only the wet when really hungry. He was lean and healthy so we didn't worry much about this then. He also doesn't seem to drink from his water bowl all that often.

He started acting really lethargic and then noticed him doing the litterbox dance, going in and out without peeing much if at all, this was at night and our vet was closed. I did research online and worried about the dangers of full blockage but as he was still able to pee very small amounts we held off on the emergency vets and i decided from researching online to give him doses of raw apple cider vinegar which presumably lowers to pH of the urine quickly.

So to be safe i stayed up all night observing him and giving him the doses every few hours and in the morning just before we were to take him into the vet we noticed he went to the litterbox and had a noticeably larger urine amount which was a relief so we decided to hold off on the vet and keep up the doses. We also cut out dry food and gave him wet food with broth or distilled water and microwaved it a little so it was a little warm, he lapped up the broth and ate a little, towards the of the evening he started peeing larger and larger amounts and started to regain his energy and playfulness and didn't seem to be in discomfort anymore. The next day he seemed fully back to normal, though we are continuing to give him one dose of acv and d-mannose and will continue to give him only wet food with added water or broth heating it up slightly as he seems to prefer. The dose we gave was 1/4 teaspoon acv mixed with 1 teaspoon distilled water plus 1/8 teaspoon "d-mannose". (google for more info)

(131) CrimsonCrow says:

December 25, 2010 at 8:46 am

Very interesting about Wellness brand cat food. My 1 1/2 year old spayed female developed struvite crystals eating Wellness brand! Hmmm?

(132) Peggy says:

December 27, 2010 at 12:46 pm

Just transferred my cat from the emergency vet hospital to his regular vet, catheter along for the

ride. He and my other cat had been doing GREAT on EVO. Then Natura, the manufacturer got bought out by Proctor & Gamble and since then, one cat has pee'd blood at the vet's office and the other was blocked up with struvite crystals. Needless to say, I'm not letting my cats eat EVO again.... I meant well and it was supposed to be an excellent food. I believe it was at one time. They love dry food, but they're getting switched to wet food. A vet tech recommended Pet Guard. The label read OK, some rice flour down in the list of ingredients....but if a cat ate a mouse or rabbit, they'd have grass/grains in their stomach, so I'm not totally freaked out by it. Anyone else having any problems with EVO food recently?

(133) Wendy says:

January 3, 2011 at 10:37 am

My cat has recurring crystals and has been on C/D and S/D short term. My determination is it seems, like people, every cat's body chemistry is different and reacts differently to the same foods or medications. I am now doing research on Cosequin for cats and Eukanuba urinary health diet.

(134) Natalie says:

January 3, 2011 at 4:26 pm

I have an incredibly sensitive little 4 year old golden persian (male) who suffers from FLUTD/FIC. He is allergic to grains and doesn't drink much water, and I'm sure has some genetic imbalances that cause him to have stress and anxiety. I bought a pet fountain and tried it out for about 4 months, but it scared him and he would never use it. He tends to have flare ups of bladder inflammation and urgency every 2-3 weeks. When I first adopted him 1 1/2 years ago, I would take him to the vet everytime he displayed these symptoms, only to find there was no infection, simply an inflammation that would most likely resolve itself within a week. He also never had any crystals present in his urine. I had been feeding him Wellness Complete Health dry food (blue bag) thinking it was grain-free, only to figure out about a couple months ago that it was not. He also gets a variety of wet foods because he gets tired of them so easily: Weruva Grandma's Stew and Paw Lickin Chicken, some TikiCat varieties, some Wellness Turkey and Chicken, and the Wellness Healthy Indulgences packets in all flavors. I switched him from the Wellness Complete Health dry food to Wellness Core dry food a couple months ago, and just a couple days ago he started again with the FLUTD symptoms. But this time it seemed worse than usual. As of last night he was passing little urine, trying to urinate outside of the box, was crying, and then vomited a few times around 2:30am. I brought him to the vet asap this morning, to find that he was indeed partially blocked. I was so surprised to hear that considering the numerous times I've brought him in previously and he has never had any crystals or mucus plugs before. The only change I made was switching his dry food to the Wellness Core. After reading this forum, I'm thinking of sticking to a wet food only diet (using limited brands), giving him bottled/filtered water (our tap water is quite hard) and staying away from fish flavor varieties of wet food.

(135) Natalie says:

January 3, 2011 at 5:51 pm

I have an incredibly sensitive little 4 year old golden persian who suffers from FLUTD/FIC. He is also allergic to grains and doesn't drink much water, and I'm quite sure has some genetic imbalances that cause him to have increased stress and anxiety. He tends to have flare ups of bladder inflammation and urgency every 2-3 weeks. but when I take him to the vet there's never an infection, only an inflammation that resolves itself within a week. They recommended I sprinkle capsule of Cosequin on his wet food once a day. In all the times to the vet he never had any crystals present in his urine. I had been feeding him Wellness Complete Health dry food thinking it was grain-free, but a couple months ago I realized that it was not. He gets a variety of wet foods: Weruva, some TikiCat varieties, and the Wellness Healthy Indulgences packets in all flavors. Two months ago I switched him from the Wellness Complete Health dry food to Wellness Core (grain-free) dry food, and just a couple days ago he started again with the usual FLUTD symptoms. But this time it was worse than usual -he was passing little urine, urinating outside of

the box, crying, and vomiting a few times while in his box. I brought him to the vet asap, to find that he was partially blocked. I was so surprised because he has never had any crystals before. The only change I made was switching his dry food to the Wellness Core. After reading this forum, I'm thinking of sticking to a wet food only diet, giving him bottled/filtered water (our tap water is quite hard) and staying away from fish flavor varieties of wet food. I know the vet will want him to be on a prescription c/d diet, but he can't have grains, and I think that food is comprised of fillers and junk.

(136) Catdancing says:

January 4, 2011 at 3:40 pm

My six year old fuzz ball underwent emergency surgery a week ago. She had largish crystals removed from her bladder. She was a rescue and has always been a very high maintenance little diva. She has up until recently refused to eat wet food. I started with Wellness, but then switched to Evo, and from there to Orijen, which she adores. The vet has put her on Royal Canin OS, which stinks and she hates. I have always fed the best food I could buy, I note that everyone seems to have a problem with wellness, does this apply to the wet food as well?

(137) steve says:

January 9, 2011 at 9:54 am

my male cat rocky had to have crystals removed from his urinary tract when he was about a year and a half. the vet recommended we feed him royal canin uninary S0 to lessen the chance that they return. rocky is now 9 years old and has been eating this food ever since the operation with a little dish of milk which he whines for every morning. he has had no relapses of crystals and he is in excellent health. hope this case helps some of you with the same circumstances with your cat. steve

(138) georgina says:

January 12, 2011 at 10:35 pm

catdancing:

was your little diva on orijen when she developed the crystals?

could it be that all that switching upset her? cats dont like lots of changes.

one of my cats was blocked a few times and was put on sd/cd.

i strongly believe he got blocked because of stress/changes in his enviroment. he was always a good drinker and got dry food in the morning and wet in the evening. i did a lot of research because i found none of the vets i was talking to could or wanted to be very helpful. they all just told me to feed kitty hills sd/cd for the rest of his life.

i slowly changed him now from dry cd to orijen but he still gets cd wet in the evening. i also spread out his food to 3meals a day and add some water to 2 of them. and i started feeding both cats separately and take away their bowl when theyre finished. they adapted well to this routine.

i was hoping to switch kitty to orijen only because i hate the cd but now im not so sure about it anymore! anyone else feeding orijen?

(139) Renee says:

January 20, 2011 at 4:42 pm

Hi there,

I've been reading through the comments and I'm hoping someone can give me some advice. I'm a new pet owner (meaning these are my 1st pets ever) to 2 kitties; a brother and sister. My husband grew up with cats but they were mostly outdoor cats and our kitties are in-doors only. We brought them home at 11 weeks old and they are now 10 months old. I have fed them from the Wellness brand since we brought them home, first on kitten food and the last 3 months they didn't like the kitten food anymore and we switched them over to Wellness CORE dry and differing varieties of the Wellness wet. They get dry twice a day and wet at night. They also drink a TON! I mean these cats go through so much water (at least 8-10 oz per day between the 2 of them) which is surprising since everything I have read says that cats don't drink that much. I'm

just wondering if I should take them off the Wellness and put them on something else since so many people are having problems with the UTI and crystals. They show no signs of any issues but I would rather stop it before it starts. I'm just at a loss of what to do since I have limited knowledge as a 1st time pet owner and really rely on forums like this to educate myself. It seems people are having problems with all kinds of brands of food so I'm not sure if I should just keep them on Wellness or switch them to something else.

(140) susan says:

January 20, 2011 at 11:39 pm

My vet in NYC (they take care only of cats, and have done it for three decades) says they're seeing all kind of urinary problems in cats on the Wellness dry foods. He said the formulation isn't right, and said that I should ABSOLUTELY take him off of it- shouldn't even leave a bowl of it out on the side, no matter that my cat barely touches it.

i'm doing Nature's Variety Instinct- I mix one raw Wellness 1-oz. medallion

<http://www.naturesvariety.com/InstinctRaw/dog/orgchicken>¹⁷ with canned Nature's Variety Instinct. the ingredients look great, and the food smells fresh. he WOLFS it down.

i also give him a RAW (only!) chicken wing every now and then. he loves them, and they keep his teeth tartar-free.

(141) Rico says:

January 21, 2011 at 2:06 am

Renee,

For optimal health, I would recommend a strictly wet diet, no dry food. In the long run, you will have a much better chance of avoiding urinary issues and other health problems. As I've indicated in posts above, my 10 year old male with a struvite crystal history gets a mix of canned Innova Evo Turkey & Chicken and prescription canned IAMS Low PH. He's been on this diet for several months now and although he hasn't had a urine test yet (the cystosentesis procedure turns him feral!), he shows no outward signs of urinary problems. His litter mate does not have a history of urinary issues. She gets canned Innova Evo Turkey & Chicken and a variety of canned Merrick Five Star Gourmet Entrees. I'm a huge fan of these Merrick entrees and so is she. They are low to moderate in carbohydrates and the ingredients are great overall. Merrick also makes a brand called Before Grain, but I personally avoid these because they contain yeast extract, which contains MSG. Merrick cat and dog food recently became available at Petco.

(142) Meg says:

January 23, 2011 at 7:01 pm

I'm amazed to have stumbled on this thread... my 5yo male cat was on Solid Gold dry for his whole life. The vet recommended that he switch to a wet food for the moisture and recommended the WELLNESS brand. He was on Wellness wet food exclusively for about 6 months before he developed crystals. Now he is on Royal Canin Urinary S/O dry food. I'm looking for an alternative because of the terrible ingredient list on this new food, which is how I found my way here.

I'm surprised to see how many people had a similar situation with Wellness food.

(143) Karen says:

January 26, 2011 at 11:29 am

Please take the time to get a book which was written by an experienced vet since 1977. Turn to page 167, Feline Bladder Problems, never again! She will explain there and throughout her book how wet/canned food is essential to a cats diet. Many major issues with cats can be solved by switching to wet diet according to her-cancer, diabetes, UTI, crystals, etc. My current experience:

My cat who is only 8 mo. old was straining to urinate (Ragdoll, 10 lb.). Took her to our vet, she has high protein and blood in the urine with crystals. I was stunned as I was feeding her Felidae

dry which is a holistic food. My vet immediately put her on Clavamox and Hills Science Diet C/D. Just last week I started to switch her to Hills (after vet visit) and then came across the above book. I'm almost 3/4 the way through the book and I'm planning on following Dr.Hodgkins advice of wet food only. Today I'm immediately taking away the Hills (don't like the corn ingredients at all-too high carb) and putting her into the wet diet. Will update to how she is doing. Hoping within a few days I see significant results as her moisture intake increases drastically. I notice that she is not a cat who drinks water frequently which is the norm for most cats.

(144) Caitlin says:

January 29, 2011 at 9:52 am

My himalayan has come down with another bout of struvite crystals. it has been multiple visits to the vet. he has been eating a mixture of nature's variety instinct with nature's variety prairie till today, where i am going to drive a hour to a pet store that sells orijen. I really liked the ingredients and the fact it has the high moisture. I would love to give him wet- but he has always refused being a stubborn himaylan. my other cats, 2 himalayans and a 16 yr old persian have never had these crystal problems before. However, after reading all these posts i am going to put them all on orijen. Willow has had to live in a cat condo cage for weeks, accepted it nicely. this guarentees i can give him his antibiotics on time and keep an eye on his drinking and food habits. Hopefully when he clears up they can eat in the same area. I will continue to keep water everywhere, including the pet fountain. I am giving him the apple cider vinegar solution someone suggested 1:4 dilution to acidfy his urine. I think i might buy that carpon herbal remedy that is equivalent to the urease. He has been getting the cranberry paste on his paws and the powder on the food, as well as the cosequin because it is supposed to line the bladder with a coating. I just hope after a month things will be better for him, he was so uncomfortable and has been such a trooper with everything. I will check back here soon and report an update. Thank you everyone for your insights on this popular topic. Does anyone else have a persian/himalayan who is so stubborn to not like anything but dry food? it is very frustrating, but i hope he likes the orijen dry.

(145) georgina says:

February 3, 2011 at 12:22 pm

Karen & Caitlin,

good luck with the food changes and hope this problem will be resolved and your cats will be fine.

I put both my cats on Orijen and they love it. They seem healthier,happier, more active and lost some extra weight too.

I really hope this food will avoid the problem longterm.

Caitlin try and add some water to the Orijen. This way you top up the waterintake. my cat always drinks the water first and still has the crunchiness after. he loves it and this way i know for sure that he gets enough water

(146) Lisa says:

February 7, 2011 at 7:08 pm

If your cat doesn't like the Hills diet try giving him Purina One Special Care for Urinary Tract Health. I have a cat with the same problem and I feed him the Purina. It does the same job and it costs much less than Hills and Waltham diets do.

(147) Marina says:

February 13, 2011 at 12:15 pm

We have been feeding Innova EVO canned for a couple of years and, for our male who had crystals in the past, absolutely no dry food. In the past month, one of our females got an infection, plus some crystals, and our male had another episode with crystals and his PH was high. I appreciate that someone advised of the change in ownership and the formula of the EVO food. Now it makes sense so I am going to look at other alternatives as we knew that something

must have caused these two cats to have issues out of the blue.

(148) Rico says:

February 13, 2011 at 3:00 pm

Natura Pet Products Inc., the maker of Innova EVO, was purchased by Procter & Gamble about 9 months ago. I don't know if there have been any formula changes since, but the evopet.com website shows the same ingredient list for the Turkey & Chicken canned as before. I had read that Turkey & Chicken canned experienced a formula change several years ago. As I've detailed in earlier posts, my male cat had 3 bladder stones removed after being on a combination of Wellness wet and dry foods. After I switched him to EVO Turkey & Chicken canned, he did well for a few months, then tested positive for crystals with a high pH. His relapse occurred in July of last year, a couple of months after the buyout was announced. But I have read other testimonies where a particular food worked for awhile, then stopped working.

(149) Dr. ST says:

February 14, 2011 at 3:59 pm

Linda has an important point that everybody should take note of. STRESS causes a change in body chemistry & resulting pH changes in the kindeys.... stress like an unclean litterbox or "perfumed" litter or a new pet or a sudden change in food, etc. YOU know your cats & you probably know what stresses them out, right?

Also, the SOURCE of water for kitties is very important!!! Tap water is very inconsistent in content (especially minerals). Nursery water is the best ...be sure to NEVER give your cat only distilled water either. Plenty of fresh (even running) water and reduced stress levels can work wonders, of course with a proper urinAry diet.

(150) Lisa says:

March 13, 2011 at 2:45 pm

After reading the comment about MSG in Merrick Before Grain canned cat food, I became concerned as that is what I am feeding my cats. I wrote to Merrick and here is their response:

We add hydrolyzed yeast to aid in digestive health (i.e. stool quality) as well as immune system functions.

Information on MSG from our nutritionist-

I think the confusion of MSG and yeast stems from the fact that Glutamic acid can be produced from the Bacterial fermentation of some hydrolyzed yeast cells. The important part of this is the bacterial fermentetion. The hydrolyzed yeast we use, is there as an organic palatant. This product is basically boiled in a weak acid solution and dried immediately to preserve the palatability enhancement characteristics. There is no bacterial fermentation cycle to produce the Glutamic acid. So, with yeast cultures and hydrolyzed yeast you get the very positive benefit of yeast metabolites and palatability.

My understanding of the process to produce MSG requires not only specific yeast species but also the addition of sodium to the bacterial fermentation cycle.

I feel confident that their foods are of very high quality and will continue to feed my cats the Before Grain canned cat foods.

(151) Rico says:

March 15, 2011 at 12:14 am

Lisa,

I believe the response you received from Merrick regarding the yeast extract ingredient in Merrick Before Grain canned cat food may be misleading. According to my research, bacterial fermentation is not necessary to produce free glutamic acid. The fact that the yeast is hydrolyzed means that processed free glutamic acid is created, regardless of whether or not fermentation takes place. Here is my research:

From the following:

<http://blog.foodfacts.com/index.php/2009/06/01/msg-exposed-where-is-it-hidden/>¹⁸

The second way of producing MSG is through breakdown of protein, i.e., processed free glutamic acid (MSG) is created when protein is either partially or fully broken apart into its constituent amino acids. A protein can be broken into its constituent amino acids in a number of ways (autolysis, hydrolysis, enzymolysis, and/or fermentation). When a protein is subject to autolysis, hydrolysis, enzymolysis, and/or fermentation, the amino acid chains in the protein are broken, and the amino acids are freed. Acids, enzymes, and/or fermentation processes may be used to create MSG in this way.

(two paragraphs later)

Processed free glutamic acid (MSG) is considered to be a constituent of a hydrolyzed protein or fermentation product because the MSG is created during the hydrolyzation or fermentation process.

Other articles:

<http://www.daystarbotanicals.com/nutritionalyeast.html>¹⁹

<http://www.advancedhealthplan.com/msgstudy.html>²⁰

(152) Rico says:

March 18, 2011 at 9:48 pm

Lisa,

Even if the yeast extract in Merrick Before Grain canned cat food does in fact contain free glutamic acid, we don't really know whether your cats will suffer any significant harm from it. Plus, the overall health benefits of the food may be overwhelming compared to any risks.

(153) Chris says:

March 20, 2011 at 4:27 am

I just learned that my 7 year old cat has crystals. My vet gave me Hills SD diet. He hates the wet food. Also, I don't like all the bi and grain products in them. However, I'm told that they dissolve crystals. So I don't know whether to stay on it or switch to Royal Canon, Inova Evo or Wynsong. Also, I have them on bottled distilled water and am wondering if that's good or not.

I also hear uvi ursa, Staphsagris and Catharsis is good for cats with UTI's Have any of you tried those

(154) Chris says:

March 20, 2011 at 5:25 am

@ Rico, Lisa Dr St – I see you've responded a few times. Can you please help me with my above question. Thanks. Concerned cat owner and lover

(155) Chris says:

March 20, 2011 at 5:28 am

@ Rico, Lisa and Dr ST – I see you've responded a few times. Can you please help me with my above questions. Thanks, concerned cat owner and lover

(156) seaweed says:

March 20, 2011 at 9:23 am

I add about 1/4 tsp of raw apple cider vinegar to my cat's wet food and it's taken care of the struvite crystals so far. Struvite crystals are alkaline, so the idea here is to make his diet a bit more acidic.

The vet had recommended the Royal Canin prescription food, but it has corn near the top of the ingredients list so I didn't use it. I don't want to have to get him treated for diabetes later due to the prescription for the crystals! Plus, corn is a common allergen for cats.

Most cat food is junk, imo. I believe it's a way for larger food companies to monetize their 4D

animals and animal waste products from the rendering plants. I'd say it's a good idea to stay away from foods owned by these large companies, E.G. Nestle, Mars, etc.

I use a rotation of Wellness, Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, Merrick, Weruva, Evo wet, with a bit of Merrick grain-free dry on the side because he loves it so much.

(157) seaweed says:

March 20, 2011 at 9:45 am

I just noticed Peggy's comment about P&G having purchased Natura, which is something I hadn't realized. I guess I'll take that food off of my kitty's rotation now. Ugh.

(158) Rico says:

March 21, 2011 at 9:32 pm

Chris,

Here's what I'm doing for my cat. He gets a mixture of IAMS Low pH prescription canned and Innova EVO Turkey & Chicken canned. I mix the two together in a bowl with added bottled spring water, usually Crystal Geiser. About 60% of the mixture is the IAMS Low pH. I chose IAMS Low pH over Hill's CD and Royal Canin Urinary SO because I like its overall ingredient profile the best of these three prescription choices. He's been on this mixture for about eight months with no issues. I gave him distilled water for the first couple of months but discontinued it because it is highly controversial. Some experts believe it is very healthy. Others believe it is dangerous because it makes the body acidic and causes health issues as a result. There's a lot of info on the net about this controversy. I'm not willing to take the risk.

(159) Chris says:

March 22, 2011 at 3:41 pm

@ Rico,

Thanks for the info!! I will also my vet about Inova EVO . My other cat had kidney problems and they gave her Hills KD. I also gave her Standard Process renal support and her kidney count was much better about 9 months later. So, I'm wondering if Hills KD was what worked too. I will keep reseaching about distilled water. I hear it's good for uti's. Also, have you heard of uvi ursa, or Catharsis for cats.?

(160) Rico says:

March 22, 2011 at 10:22 pm

Chris,

I had tried Innova EVO Turkey & Chicken canned as the only food in my cat's diet. It worked for a few months but he then tested positive for crystals with a high pH. So my vet suggested combining it with one of the prescription diets. I like keeping the EVO as part of the mixture because of the overall quality of the food. Also, my cat's diet is 100% wet. No dry food for him.

From what I've read, uva ursi helps to prevent urinary tract infections, although I don't believe it prevents crystals.

I'm glad you're doing research on distilled water. You shouldn't have to search long before you find arguments against it.

(161) Chris says:

March 24, 2011 at 4:13 pm

Rico,

Thanks again!! I guess I'll try the sd since the kd seemed to work for my other cat. Now my cat with the uti(Sylvester) is sneezing frequently. I took her to the vet and they said that his heart, lungs and glands seem fine. Also, no fever. Trying to figure out why. I gave him a little cranberry powder to treat his uti and he started sneezing later that night. So, I laid off it for a couple of days. Then I thought it may be the earth friendly oder and stain remover I use afer he was going on a weve pad. He still uses cat litter most of the time. Also thinking it may be due to his

frequent vet visits in the past week (3). Any homeopathic suggestions on what to do about the sneezing. Maybe it will just pass. He's on antibiotics. Can this be the cause? Thanks

(162) Rico says:

March 24, 2011 at 9:49 pm

Chris,

I don't think antibiotics would cause sneezing. My cat sneezed for a day or so recently. Then it stopped. I figure he might have gotten cat litter dust in his nose. Perhaps your cat has some particle stuck in his nose. I don't know of any homeopathic remedies for sneezing, although someone else might. My advice would be to continue to consult with your vet.

(163) Marisa says:

April 7, 2011 at 10:52 pm

I am looking for a good dry food (I know it's not as good as wet) that can be left out for the cats when I'm out of town and the cat-sitter only comes by once a day.

I have 2 10-year olds – one male who developed struvite crystals and a bladder stone recently, and one female with Cardiomyopathy (heart failure).

Prior to adopting the cats (only 6 months ago) they ate canned Fancy Feast but mostly Purina One kibble. I switched them to Soulistic canned food twice a day, and Merrick Before Grain kibble left out all the time. (I think the Before Grain was the cause of the stones, after research now, I think it has too many veggies and carbs). They also have a water fountain which they love and I believe that they now get plenty of water.

Marvin, my male kittie, is now on Royal Canin SO canned and dry to dissolve the stone, although the vet wants him to stay on it for life. I'm not thrilled about the ingredients in it, though. Millie, the female with the heart condition, needs to be on a low-sodium diet (Royal Canin and other prescription diets have lots of sodium to encourage drinking). It is very difficult to feed the 2 cats separately, and there is tension since they know they are not being fed the same food. I can keep their meal-times when they get canned food separate most of the time, but there are times that I would like to leave a bowl of dry food out and available.

Any suggestions for a natural dry food that might help to dissolve stones and not hurt the other kittie?

(164) Pam says:

April 12, 2011 at 12:25 pm

My 7 year old female cat had a bladder stone removed and crystals still show up. She hates dry Hills Prescription c/d. She won't drink water. She will drink chicken broth, low sodium, msg free. I am still trying to find food. I tried the Hills canned prescription c/d. She vomits.

(165) Rico says:

April 13, 2011 at 12:53 am

Pam,

See if your vet can prescribe IAMS Low pH canned. My cat really likes the stuff. My vet uses Hills C/D, but she prescribed IAMS Low pH when I requested it. The ingredients aren't perfect, but they're better than C/D in my opinion. The first three ingredients of IAMS Low pH are chicken broth, chicken liver, and chicken, which is a pretty good foundation.

(166) julie says:

May 6, 2011 at 5:04 am

i have just been reading some of the comments bout struvite crystals i have a 4 and a half year old male cat called oscar who over the past year has been to the vet with several bouts of cystitis which has cleared with courses of antibiotics under vets advice we have had him scanned and the vets found struvite crystals in his bladder we have now been told to change his food to prescription diet he was previously on whiskas meat with the occasional bowl of go cat dry food.

oscar has other medical problems such as hypotrophic cardiomyopathy a very severe heart condition which he takes regular medication for my concern is lower certain things in his diet could this effect his heart condition which at the moment is behaving itself the vet doesnt seem to think changing his diet will affect his heart condition but im very worried as at the moment trying to deal with the crystals is enough also i have two other cats that at the moment eat the same food as oscar but are not showing any urinary problems yet as yet should i be worried about them

(167) Diane says:

May 22, 2011 at 11:53 pm

I had read how beneficial raw diet was for cats so I began to feed my two cats raw mixed with their regular canned food (Pinnacle). Luca my male cat snubbed it but Bella my female who binges ate and about 3-4 days later developed the worst struvite crystals with blood in her urine. I am convinced the raw diet did it. Beware! Clavamox wasn't even working. And she wasn't eating any of the CDs/SOs, etc. I tried 7-8 canned prescription brands. Finally the vet prescribed Ammonil with any canned food she liked to balance her PH and she's much better. But..I hate any meds so I'm weaning the Ammonil. Both cats were eating Pinnacle Ocean Flavor but now I'm hesitant based on the comments about Fish. Bella always ate canned food and still got sick. She doesn't drink much water and if my cats drink, the drink from the faucet even though I tried the fountains. I'm slowly transitioning to Natural Balance canned, does anyone have feedback on that brand. The cans don't list the magnesium or ash percentages. Could it be there are none? Both cats like it which is better for me as before I had to feed Luca Pinnacle with Trader Joes Tuna for Cats on top. Now he will eat Natural Balance plain and so will Bella. Also, what is Nursery water someone recommended. I live in northern CA which I thought our tap water was decent.

I also believe Stress can be a factor. Bella had one episode of crystals in 2010 when I was majorly stressed with a new job I hated and traveled a lot. And got another bout when I brought in a foster child with issues. Stress for all. God Bless our kitties.

(168) Kathy says:

May 25, 2011 at 9:02 pm

This thread has been very interesting. My cat (now 🙄) had been treated for crystals in '07 3x. My vet put him on Hill's Prescription s/d at first, then c/d for maintenance, suppling with canned food as desired. It's been working great for the last 3 1/2 years, then all of a sudden, I noticed he was straining to urinate. He is currently at the vet for catheterization, flushing, and overnight observation. He said he would test the crystals to find out what type they are. Apparently there are different types of urinary crystals and if it is due to low acidity in the urine then my cat should go back on the S/d for a little while before resuming the c/d.

But if this is caused because of a different type of crystal, then Royal Canin S/O would be recommended. Has anyone else been told anything similar?

Obviously, I will have this clarified when I call the vet tomorrow for a followup. I'm so confused. At the time that the vet was explaining all this, I was frazzled and scared for my kitty, not to mention worried at the thought of spending \$600+ to have my cat fixed so it was difficult to process the scientific information overload that the vet was throwing at me.

Now I'm curious if I should try a different food. I thought the Hill's prescription c/d was working like a charm, but after all this time, I'm scared that this will happen to my cat again. I cannot afford to have him unblocked repeatedly costing around \$600-\$900 each time! Any advice???

(169) Rico says:

May 26, 2011 at 3:02 am

Kathy,

The first thing I would recommend is to get your cat off dry food entirely. My cat was a dry food addict and he now eats canned exclusively, so I know it can be done. Each of the major

prescription diets has a canned food component. These are from Hills, Royal Canin, and IAMS. Your selection will depend on the diagnosis from your vet and his and your brand preference. Personally, I put my cat on IAMS Low pH for his struvite crystal problem because I like the overall ingredient profile more than Hills CD and Royal Canin Urinary SO. I also mix in some Innova EVO Turkey & Chicken canned for it's very healthy ingredients, but there is some risk in using this because it is not formulated specifically to prevent struvite crystals.

(170) Kathy says:

May 26, 2011 at 11:51 am

First, Thank you.

Second, It's weird talking to "Rico", since my husband's name is Rico and it's not a name you hear alot. LOL.

Third, I think I will try the canned food diet.

I was just wondering what the difference is between SO and S/d. I was told that they have opposite effects on the urinary tract. They are to be used for 2 different types of crystals. In fact, the vet said that if it is in fact struvite, that the SO will be detrimental to my cat's health. SO is to be used for a different type of crystal (my apologies, I don't remember what the vet said it was). I will have to verify with him I guess and repost when I figure it out.

Thanks.

(171) hannikins says:

May 27, 2011 at 2:31 pm

I had a problem a few years ago with my cat getting recurrent blockage from struvite crystals. At the time he was 2 years old, and had been eating nothing but Wellness Core Chicken/Turkey CANNED food all his life. My boy never had and never will have dry food while living under my roof!

I had wondered if his condition was just due to faulty genetics, but after switching him to a rotation of canned Natural Balance Indoor Formula, and canned Merrick Cowboy Cookout, and he hasn't had a single recurrence since.

I see there are several posts saying not to blame Wellness, that it's all genetics, or that dry food is to blame. I find it hard NOT to blame Wellness, when my boy had several back to back FLUTD episodes in the span of two years, THE TWO YEARS HE SPENT EATING WELLNESS CANNED, and then a switch to a different food, and suddenly not a single episode for 2 years?

(172) Rico says:

May 27, 2011 at 8:51 pm

Kathy,

Hill's s/d is formulated to dissolve struvite crystals. Royal Canin Urinary SO is formulated to dissolve struvite crystals and prevent struvite, calcium oxalate, and calcium phosphate crystals. Of the two, I prefer the ingredients of Royal Canin Urinary SO.

(173) Melanie says:

June 2, 2011 at 4:36 pm

These comments have been so helpful. My 4 year old male just had surgery because he was blocked. We had just switched him to an all wet diet, however we were just using the store brand wet food as we figured that food is food right?

This is the second time he's had crystals and a uti...the first time we just got some prazosin and it cleared up right away. This time I let the vet convince me to have the surgery and \$700 later, he's still peeing a little blood. I just noticed it today but he's not straining or going to the littlebox alot.

We would like to try a better food and we were leaning towards Wellness.

We also have a 2 year old female and a 9 year old male who has never had any problems on the store brand food.

I'm basically looking for any suggestions for wet food that we can feed all three cats, with trying to keep the cost down. I'm not considering buying the stuff from the vet as I can't justify the cost.

Thanks for any help!

(174) Rico says:

June 3, 2011 at 1:24 am

Melanie,

I would definitely avoid Wellness. My cat was on a combination of Wellness wet and dry when he developed his bladder stones. Many posters in this forum have similar horror stories with that brand. Regarding cost, if you were willing to spend your money on Wellness, you should be able to afford other super-premium brands as well as the prescription food from the vet. Most are priced similarly to Wellness. For prescription IAMS Low pH, I pay \$17.16 before tax for a case of 12 6 oz. cans. That's \$1.43 per can. And the ingredients are decent. Chicken broth, chicken liver, and chicken are the first 3. For your other cats, I highly recommend Merrick 5 Star Gourmet Entree cans, which come in 9 different formulas (merrickpetcare.com). Merrick is sold at natural pet food stores and Petco. Petco frequently offers discounts. You can also order Merrick online at Pet Food Direct (petfooddirect.com) and they frequently offer discounts as well. My cats also eat Innova EVO Turkey and Chicken canned, although this is a little more expensive. One more point about cost. I believe that in general, you have to pay for quality.

(175) cynde says:

June 15, 2011 at 12:05 am

All my cats have been eating Wellness grain free canned and Evo canned, plus Evo dry all their lives. And, nothing but PUR filtered water mixed with their food and in a water fountain.

Now, one of my 4 year old cats developed struvite crystals and Hills S/D was prescribed to dissolve the crystals. He likes both and eats them just fine and he started peeing normally after just one day of eating it. However, I hate the ingredients...and my kitties never have had grain before. My other cats want to eat it too, so I have to supervise eating time. The cat's brother seems to be just fine, without crystal problems.

I have researched and found many supplements available on Amazon and am going to try some...as well as getting a stainless steel drinking fountain.

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I have researched and found many supplements available on Amazon and am going to try some...as well as getting a stainless steel drinking fountain.

(177) Nancy says:

June 28, 2011 at 1:31 pm

I was shocked to read about all the urinary problems cats develop after eating Wellness. My kitten developed struvite crystals after eating Wellness Core. He had a complete blockage and is only 11 months old! He is now on Purina U/R and I am trying to get him on a good canned formula so far with no success.

(178) kim d. says:

June 29, 2011 at 2:35 pm

Three cats – one male, 3 years old – out biggest wet food eater; eats Fancy Feast Classic. Just had a large Struvite stone removed. Will NOT eat anything but pate style food – so the Royal Canin s/o is a non-starter. He is quite picky. I've been trying "higher end" foods – so far only success has been Innova (not Evo). Anyone know of any pate style urinary wet foods?

(179) Rico says:

June 29, 2011 at 7:32 pm

kim d.,

If you are willing to go the prescription route, IAMS Low pH is pate style. The first 3 ingredients are chicken broth, chicken liver, and chicken.

(180) sandra says:

July 9, 2011 at 3:36 pm

Vets are like people doctors; some are well versed on diet and many are not. I took the advice of a previous contributor and checked out "catinfo.org"

The info is by Lisa A. Pierson, DVM. Every cat owner should read her article on feline nutrition.

(181) Beth says:

July 11, 2011 at 1:33 pm

Just came from the vet: my 5 year old cat has struvite crystals. And guess what, he's eaten nothing but Wellness Core dry for the past 2 years...plus whatever little bits of canned food he'll eat, which are mostly fish/tuna varieties. The problem with all of these great diet suggestions is how to switch a cat? My dogs eat raw and home-cooked and i'm happy to do the same for my cat, but he wants nothing to do with anything but his favorite foods, and I know that if he doesn't eat well and regularly, he could develop fatty liver disease, which is fatal. Yikes, I don't know what to do!

(182) Rico says:

July 11, 2011 at 10:48 pm

Beth,

On the catinfo.org website that Sandra mentioned in post #180, Dr. Pierson gives some tips on how to transition dry food addicts to canned food. To find these tips, go to catinfo.org and scroll down about two thirds of the page to the heading "Transitioning Dry Food Addicts to Canned Food".

I used her suggestion to sprinkle parmesan cheese on the canned food and it worked great for my dry food addicted cat.

(183) Tara says:

July 18, 2011 at 10:45 pm

My 1.5 year old male cat (MR Man) was admitted to the animal hospital Thursday evening. After 36 hours on an IV, 24 hours with a catheter, a series of tests and \$1650 later he came home Saturday morning. I am still very concerned with his moisture intake.

I have been feeding my cats Origen (both kinds) for the past year or so. I fed my 6 year old female Royal Canin for years but switched when Mr Man joined our family. Origin did wonders for Angel, my female cat. It was always hard to keep weight on her and ever since I switched her diet, she's gained weight and is a lot more active. Angel has always been extremely picky soft food eater. She only likes Fancy feast pate fish blends and snappy toms. I feed her one snappy tom a day but Mr man has never ever touched soft food. He sniffs at it but won't go for it. I'm kinda at a lost as to what to do. I thought he was drinking tons of water but apparently he wasn't. He is on Royal Canin Medi Cal Urinary SO. I will keep him on it as long as following tests show he is improving but I still need to increase his water intake. I bought a cheap plastic water fountain the day he returned home while I wait for the Stainless Steel Drinkwell 360 to arrive. it

was \$60 cheaper ordering through Costco than PetSmart! He's not that interested in it so far. Anyone have experience and success converting a dry food cat to wet food? I could use every little bit of advice there is. I went and bought some raw food samples today along with some Wellness canned food. I swear he rolled his eyes at me...lol.....

(184) Rico says:

July 19, 2011 at 2:15 am

Tara,

Please read comment #182 for tips on how to transition dry food addicts to wet food. You might want to avoid Wellness, however, as many of the posters on this board have had their cats get struvite crystals and stones while on it, myself included. A mixture of Crystal Geysers bottled spring water, IAMS Low pH prescription canned, and Innova Evo Turkey & Chicken canned has worked really well for my cat. He's been fine for the past year on that combination, although he hasn't been tested. I also like Merrick's 5 Star Gourmet Entrees, although only my other cat has been fed those.

(185) Tiggers Mom says:

July 22, 2011 at 3:11 pm

My Bengal came down with Crystals, Only 5 yrs of AGE.. And I am concerned about his Brother now too. They Gave the S/O prescription diet. Vet Never said Dry or Canned or Both. So I Bought Both. VERY EXPENSIVE! Although I Noticed my Bengal has an Issue with Drinking, Only Wants Running water, or Water out of a Cup. Rarely Drinks from his Own Bowl. So, I will be buying the Running Water Bowl for him when I get the chance.

(186) Paul says:

July 25, 2011 at 6:37 pm

My almost 2 year old cats have been on Holistic Select chicken and lamb wet food since they were 8 months old. The ingredients are great in my opinion and they have so far never had any health problems. I have read only good things about this cat food, so unless someone has something negative to say about it, I would consider trying it out.

Chicken, Chicken Broth, Chicken Liver, Lamb, Rolled Oats, Dried Egg Product, Carrots, Peas, Potatoes, Guar Gum, Brewers Dried Yeast, Potassium Chloride, Tricalcium Phosphate, Flaxseed, Cranberry Powder, Dried Kelp, Vitamins [Vitamin E, A, D3, B12 Supplements, Thiamine Mononitrate, Niacin, d-Calcium Pantothenate, Pyridoxine Hydrochloride, Riboflavin Supplement, Folic Acid, Biotin], Minerals [Ferrous Sulfate, Zinc Oxide, Copper Proteinate, Manganous Sulfate, Potassium Iodide, Sodium Selenite], Choline Chloride, Taurine, Carrageenan, Yucca Schidigera Extract.

(187) mizdyan says:

August 1, 2011 at 10:27 am

I have a black and white short haired female cat. Her mother was only 9 months old when she had this litter. Within the first 7 months of her life, she was diagnosed with struvite crystals and had to be operated on.

I kept her on the Royal Canin urinary food for a long time and then switched her to Natural Balance, because the ingredients seemed to be much better. July 27, she was operated on again and this time she almost died. The vet seems to think there is some genetic connection here. From now on, once a year she will have a urine check and that will tell them if more are forming. She, LuLu, is such a wonderful cat, although it cost a small fortune, I just couldn't let her go. She is God's creature and was sent to me to take care of and that I will do!

(188) Bobby says:

August 19, 2011 at 5:41 pm

Just came home from the Vets, and I had to have my 4 yr. old fixed male put to sleep. Yes, I was feeding him dry food. After reading all the above comments, does it seem to be more male cats

with having crystals then females ? My cat was my barn cat and I could not find him. When I did find him it was too late.

(189) Rico says:

August 19, 2011 at 7:08 pm

Bobby,

I am very sorry to hear of your loss. Both males and females develop struvite crystals. However, it is a much more significant problem for males due to their anatomy. The opening through which urine passes is much smaller for males, so they get blocked much easier.

(190) daniela says:

August 24, 2011 at 1:34 pm

FEED RAW!!!! the cat needs the moisture! give the cat magnesium and cranberry supplements (e.g. berry balance from solid gold or wholecran intense from wholistic...as for the magnesium i think vitality science sells some)

trust me prescribed foods are crap! takes away crystals but does not fix the underlying problem. My cat has been on this diet and he is 18 years old and STILL acts like a kitten from all the energy his food gives him.

great raw brans are Rad cat, Primal, Natures Logic, and Natures variety. Please if you love your cat you will feed raw.

(191) Emma says:

August 26, 2011 at 7:16 am

Hi all

My 11 year old male cat has just been diagnosed with Struvite crystals with a urine Ph of 7.5.

Our vets have only prescribed Royal Canin, wet and dry and said he needs to be on this for at least 6 months but already he's looking at his bowl and you can see him thinking "not this again!" so have only just started to look into "other" treatments for this.

Our vets stressed that he can "only" have this food, nothing extra i.e fresh tuna, chicken etc but I find this hard to believe!

Just dropped him at the cattery and they will be providing me with a Homeopathic vet's number on our return from holiday.

Has anyone gone down this route and does anyone know of "safe" normal foods to give them?

(192) Rico says:

August 27, 2011 at 6:50 pm

Emma,

A year ago my cat's pH tested at 7.5 also. My vet advised wet food only. Specifically, she recommended I give him a mixture of Innova EVO Turkey & Chicken and my choice of one of three prescription brands: Royal Canin, IAMS, or Hills. I chose IAMS because I prefer its ingredients over the other two. She also recommended I occasionally give him tuna juice, just to further increase the moisture in his diet. And I kept adding water directly to his food. Your vet is taking the more traditional approach of prescription food only, but I don't see why he couldn't have a certain amount of other food as well. Like many of us here have posted, I recommend keeping dry food to a minimum if not eliminating it altogether. Please let us know what the homeopathic vet says.

(193) Tanya says:

September 8, 2011 at 11:03 pm

For; Comment #186 (Paul)

WARNING!!! Yucca Schidigera Extract/Yucca Extract, causes Renal Failure in cats.

I have also a cat that has had the Struvite Crystals. I have done much research and give her 2 different brands/types of the food (kibble and canned) that is recommended. Regarding other foods I "NEED" to do "MORE" research; Orijen (seems to be good, however currently in British Columbia there is radiation from what is going on in Japan – which lasts for about 5 years radiation lingers), and Weruva (seems good also, however I "NEED" to do "MORE" research – I don't know if they get any of their products from China). There is one more food that I "NEED" to look into and that is a canned food from Loblaws in the Healthfood section – I am also uncertain if the ingredients comes from China.

One can make their own cat food however you "NEED" to make certain that the food gives the proper vitamins and minerals. Antibiotic Free chicken is a good idea, and you "NEED" to add other things as well. Cats "DON'T" digest, beef, and pork properly. Corn ingredients are fillers and can cause allergies. Raw food can be harmful due to Salmonella poisoning, and if bone pieces cause tearing in your cat's esophagus, and/or intestinal tract it could have life threatening consequences.

Any meat listed as By Product means dead, diseased and dying parts of other animals. Whatever you do you "NEED" to be careful.

(194) Rico says:

September 9, 2011 at 4:45 pm

In post #193, Tanya wrote, "WARNING!!! Yucca Schidigera Extract/Yucca Extract, causes Renal Failure in cats."

Through research, I have not been able to find any conclusive evidence to substantiate the above claim.

The following link provides a good discussion of a possible link between yucca schidigera extract and feline renal failure.

<http://itchmoforums.com/pet-food-questions-and-researching-foodsingredients/yucca-schidigera-extract-some-questions-t4302.0.html>²¹

The only advice I would give here is to assess your own comfort level regarding feeding your cats foods containing this ingredient.

(195) pawilson says:

September 14, 2011 at 6:05 pm

My 1 1/2 year old male cat just developed a UTI with crystals while on Wellness Dry/Wet mixture....Vet recommended Royal Canin SO...I'm only using the wet formula as I'm afraid to add the dry food. Just a note I had two dogs previously on Wellness all their lives and both died of different kinds of cancer.....I am now concerned after reading some of these posts especially with the experience I've had....

(196) Jennifer says:

September 22, 2011 at 1:38 pm

My cat recently had surgery to remove bladder stones (at the time they thought they were Calcium Oxalate), turns out they were struvite. He also had a very bad infection, so it is unclear whether he developed the stones from diet or infection or a combination. I had no idea anything was wrong. He is currently on the Purina UR canned food he eats it ok, but not great. He loves wellness core wet food, but I am leery of putting him back on that now, although most people had problems with dry food, which I was feeding him as well, as well as we moved around a lot during the time we found all of this out so stress was a huge contributor. I got the Purina from the vet that did the surgery, but we have since moved and I am running out and the vet I went to here only has science diet and royal canin. Both of which my cat doesn't like. We tried them because I said my cat wasn't 100% happy with the Purina but they really got the thumbs down. I am starting to run low on the Purina, he is currently crystal free and I want to keep it that way. I am sure I could call either vet I have worked with and get a prescription for the Purina and order

it online. Any other ideas? I would love to be able to find a food that I could buy at petco or petsmart though so I could try it to see if he would like it.

(197) Darrowcr says:

September 23, 2011 at 1:34 pm

When all else fails and my kitty baby won't eat anything else , I give him canned pure tuna packed in water.

(198) Wanda says:

September 28, 2011 at 4:40 pm

My 5 year old female cat developed crystals in her urine and was in so much pain. The vet said that there was no infection and sent me home with a list of things to try, plus some pain meds. She believed it was stress related, because the other female cat was challenging her, after the death of our male cat. I think that was part of it. My male cat couldn't eat dry, without vomiting, so I switched them all the canned food. After he passed away, from cancer, I decided to switch my females back to a dry food and just giving them wet food morning and night. I wanted to give them a healthy food, so chose Blue Buffalo. Right away, I noticed that my cat was drinking a lot more water. In the shower, in the sink, water dish, etc... I didn't really think much of it, because she was still acting normal. Then the meowing started and the going just outside the box. I know that the dry food caused this. I never had problems when I used Purina One for Urinary Health. My cat was still having problems after the Vet gave us pain meds and I did some research, because the Vet had basically washed her hands of this problem and I read about Apple Cider Vinegar. I started adding a cap full of ACV to a cup full of water and then putting a tbspc or 2 in with her wet food. The following day, I was standing next to her litterbox and I heard the urine just streaming out of her. I hadn't heard that in over a month. No straining, no peeing in small amounts. Now, I mix it in with her canned food a few times a day and give her just a handful of Purina One once a day. Vets are wonderful, but they don't know everything. I can't even find out the Ash content for Wellness, which I had switched to first. The cat seemed worse, so I stopped using that. Organic pet food is not regulated, so buyer beware.

(199) Renee says:

October 5, 2011 at 5:01 pm

I appreciate everyones input, helps me feel not alone in this, but I also feel overwhelmed, I still have NO IDEA what is the best food to keep your cats on to prevent this struvite crystal formation again... two pieces of information I found useful that everyone can do no matter what food your on is...

"Although it might not seem important, regulating the frequency of meals fed can play a direct role in the prevention of FLUTD. After a cat consumes a meal, its urine undergoes a temporary rise in pH (postprandial alkaline tide). For those cats allowed to eat and nibble all day long (such as those fed dry foods), this might promote relatively constant alkaline urine, and thereby predispose to struvite crystal formation. As a result, in terms of preventing FLUTD, offering one or two meals a day rather than free-choice meals is preferred."

"Sticking to one food rather than changing flavors or brands has also been found to be helpful."

Wishin' everyone and their furry companions health and happiness

(200) kate says:

October 6, 2011 at 7:15 am

I surely see a recurring theme here.. Wellness and Struvite stone/ crystal formation! Yikes! I would honestly STOP buying Wellness products. I think we have enough direct evidence here to see a strong correlation of crystal/ stone formations AND WELLNESS!!!

I had my cat on Wellness (dry diet only) for 3 years and she developed stones.. The stones needed to be removed... The surgery was very traumatic for her (and for me). I surely don't want to see her go through that trauma again so making sure she is on the RIGHT diet is critical.

I have done a LOT of research in this area and while my cat has been on Purina UR (to prevent stone formations). I have learned (from a Vet) that a BETTER / healthier diet is one that is Grain Free, High protein, low carb diet..The key is making sure your cat gets liquid in her/ her diet!

A combination of 90% WET food-and 10% dry is fine... (100% wet is also fine)

An excellent choice is FROMM's Dry food (Grain free). It also comes in wet food. However, you can go to PetPeople and purchase their premium canned food- Innova, EVO it is 95 % BEEF, Grain Free and Low carb..

I hate to say it – but the prescription diets are not very healthy and completely removing magnesium from a cat's diet is not good for the cat's central nervous system. The larger goal is to increase water intake and put cat's on a diet that includes GRAIN FREE / High protein and Low Carb diet. Try it my friends! Your cat will thank you for it!

A loving cat owner in Ohio.

(201) Elaine says:

November 10, 2011 at 1:06 am

It is so great to see you all care so much about your cats and their health. =) I too am dealing with the issue of Struvite crystals. Have found some very good information here some of which I have just recently been learning about, wish I had found this out many years ago.Although it does seem like it can happen sometimes to even cats that have been eating mostly wet diets, it does seem like the overwhelming percentages are amongst the dry food animals.

<http://www.catinfo.org/>²² page

I also went to that page and recommend it as well. It has extensive really good information, and it lines up with some of the information I have been told by a good vet that crystals ARE food related and read recently in a cat magazine, that crystals seem to be from a predominantly/all dry diet. Although I am sure there is exceptions sometimes as there always is.

(202) Chris says:

November 10, 2011 at 2:07 pm

I just lost my 2-1/2 year old male cat last night after having a blockage removed. He had repeated bouts with crystals in his urine. He was fed a combination of Wellness wet and dry food. The vet recommended a short course of feeding with Royal Canin wet & dry, and said he should be able to go back on his regular diet afterwards. Like many others, I am now having concerns about having fed Wellness. This cat had a ready supply of water (multiple locations) at all times and always seemed to drink an ample amount.

(203) Heather says:

November 18, 2011 at 7:17 pm

My cat has been to the vet several times for Crystals.After doing my own research I now give him his special Dry food from the vet but I also give him half a can of grain free wet food every night and have not had a problem in 2 years. There is something about feeding him grain free wet food that seems to work.

(204) Heather says:

November 30, 2011 at 1:40 pm

We had three cats, 2 seniors 14 years old and a kitten who is 4 months old now. We had used Iams for years and our new Vet suggested Wellness. After being on the Wellness all three ended up with blockages. We lost one of the older cats. We feed a combination of wet (twice a day) and dry a little each day. I won't use Wellness again. I've switched to Halo brand food and have had no further problems. Do the research on your own of course but I like the Halo and will stick with it.

(205) Bx says:

December 3, 2011 at 8:02 am

Three years ago my cat suffered from urinary crystals and had to be catheterised as an emergency. He was put on Royal Canin urinary s/o dried food and has been well ever since. A week ago he was changed to urinary s/o moderate calorie dried food (only because the wrong order came in) and yesterday he was admitted again with a blockage.

It may just be a coincidence but I thought it worth a comment in case anyone else has the same experience and trend emerges.

(206) Dustin says:

December 27, 2011 at 10:40 am

Hello fellow cat lovers. Glad I found these comments as this has been the most informative page I've found yet regarding this horrible issue our poor kitties have to deal with. I just have a few things I'd like to add to the wealth of information here.

My siamese cat was having some serious issue trying to urinate this christmas eve. Luckily I was nearby while he was having issues in his litter box and we quickly got him to the emergency room. He had a serious blockage caused by struvite crystals, and needed to be cathed and stayed there for the next 48 hours. Here is some info on his background.

He is only 2 1/2 years old, however is unfortunately in the high risk categories: siamese, male, indoor cat, slightly over weight, part of a multi-cat home, and sadly, was on a nearly all dry diet. He has been fed Origen (apparently a highly regarded brand, grain free, also quite expensive) since he was able to eat dry food. Normally we fed the chicken variety, but last time I picked up a bag of the fish flavour. He had been eating this for about a month before the blockage. He was given wet food, usually daily, but as a small additive 'treat', of varying brands and types.

We actually have had a fountain water bowl for quite some time and both cats use it regularly. We actually had a new one under the christmas tree for them, so we got that setup as well as soon as we got our baby home. We're also placing regular bowls of fresh water around the house to promote 'drive-by' drinking.

The emergency vet has given us a selection of Royal Canin urinary issue foods to try with him, and so far he seems to like it. Until I find more information to steer me otherwise, I will be feeding him Royal Canin S/O for at least a month, or until his urine tests come back clean, and then will look for something healthier if possible.

Thanks to everyone for posting their experiences here.

(207) Becca says:

December 29, 2011 at 3:25 pm

Hello All,

I'd just like to share what I've been doing for my cat, Ichiro. He's just over 4 and had previously been fed on dry Authority (a brand made just for PetSmart, apparently). A few months ago, I left for a week, he became stressed (even though we drove across the entire country together last summer!), and developed his first struvite crystal blockage. He was catheterized for the weekend and prescribed the Hills Urinary. He HATED this food, so he didn't eat it and me being a "I just want you to be happy" animal mom, gave him his Authority food again. Less than a month later, another blockage.

So, this time (to avoid surgery) he was prescribed Royal Canin S/O, which he likes (they make a dry formula, but he only gets wet because I don't want any more blockages...). Like many people here, I'm not impressed with the ingredients, but he gets it anyway. To balance the terrible ingredients, I reviewed the mineral content of many wet foods and give him EVO 95% Turkey/Chicken. We haven't had any problems since this switch (knock on wood).

Ironically, he's lost a BUNCH of weight by switching to the wet food. He leaves food in his dish at the end of the evening, so I know he's not going hungry. He used to be in the "overweight" category at 17lbs (he's a loooooong cat) and now he's down to 12lbs. Not sure why this is, but I

think it's due to the moisture in the food making him more full. He's also much more full of energy! I love my "new" kitty even more 😊

So, Ichiro gets: 1/3 Royal Canin S/O (wet) and 2/3 EVO 95% Turkey & Chicken (wet)

On a completely different note, we also switched litter after, during my research on struvite crystals, found an article about bowel impaction with clumping litter. We switched to "Feline Pine" (found it at Target and PetCo), and I LOVE IT! It DOESN'T SMELL! It's the best invention EVER, in my humble opinion, and I just wanted to share.

Cheers Good luck!

(208) Sue says:

December 30, 2011 at 12:26 pm

One of my cats has a problem with struvite crystals and the vet recommended Purina UR ST/OX. I wasn't comfortable feeding him that and he now eats only Wellness grain free canned food (beef, chicken, turkey flavors). I also give him Animals Apothecary Tinkle Tonic twice a day. The combination of the canned food and the Tinkle Tonic seems to work.

(209) Rico says:

December 30, 2011 at 6:05 pm

Becca,

I suspect the reason your cat has slimmed down so much is the extremely low carbohydrate content in the EVO wet food. My cat went from an overweight 16.5 pounds to 12.5 pounds after being switched to a low carb diet.

(210) Carol says:

January 1, 2012 at 1:26 am

I had two old cats with struvite crystals. The Royal Canin Rx dire made all the cats obese and their fur was terrible. After much research, I put them on Wellness dry (blue bag with cranberry added to increase the acidity), and the various pate canned foods. I had 9 cats and no stones or crystals for 6 years. I am down to 5 cats now, they were on the same foods and then I added Weruva. The cats all loved the canned Mideast Feast, Mediterranean Harvest, Asian Fusion and Meow Lua. Within weeks I had two cats with crystals (both 5 years old). I am switching them back to Wellness, using the minced chicken turkey and tuna flavors as they like those the best. I'm thinking of going to spring water as we have very hard water here and the male cat with the huge stones drinks a lot of water.

I've recommended a combo of Wellness dry (blue bag not Core) and the regular canned (pate and minced or sliced) and have heard only success from this. I'm really sad to hear of so many people having problems. I've never tried Core and won't now. But I wanted to say there is success among some of us with Wellness but I will watch my Andy-cat carefully now!

(211) free says:

January 2, 2012 at 11:13 am

I spread Friskes pouched wet food over my cats dry food every morning. No crystals and their fur is shiny and soft.

Cats need liquids in their solid diet to keep their urinary tract & bowels moist and moving. Total Dry food diet is counter productive and leads to a cat drinking a lot of water and urinating a lot to make up the difference.

I get the 24 pouch variety at Wal Mart (\$13/box) along with Friskes Surf & Turf (\$13/bag) dry. Science Hill is getting too expensive @ \$ 35/bag now.

(212) Lyrick says:

January 6, 2012 at 8:48 pm

Our poor cat Charlie has been at the vet since December 31 because of struvite crystals. They unblocked him on the Saturday and she said he was full of crystals. They put in a catheter and IV

for 48 hours. When they removed it he urinated but then he was starting to have problems urinating again. We did have some good news, his kidneys were not affected and his blood was alright, they also did not see anything in the X-rays. On Wednesday they sedated him again and reinserted the catheter and he did not have anymore crystals, but even with the catheter he was still not urinating. They decided to take an ultrasound, his bladder seemed fine and his ureters were also okay. This was very nerve wracking that he still would not urinate. On Thursday they decided to give him morphine in case he was not urinating because of the pain and they gave him a muscle relaxant. On Thursday when we were visiting him he pulled on his catheter bent it and ripped his stitches so they decided to take it off. When I called the vet 5 hours later I finally got good news. He had urinated twice! We are now Friday and so far so good. He is supposed to come home tomorrow. I am so scared that something goes wrong.

This has been a terribly stressful week and I am still very stressed and probably will be for a while. I will check the litter box like a hawk!

I feel terribly guilty Charlie used to only eat the best quality canned food Evo, Wellness Core and regular Wellness, and never dry food, but the store was out of our way and more and more I would buy food at the supermarket. I would buy canned Fancy Feast, Friskies and Whiskas. I also started giving him dry food as treats. He liked it, he seemed fine and happy so we were happy to oblige. Now I feel terribly guilty! The vet did say that it was good that he was mostly on wet food.

The vets worked very hard to help Charlie I don't know yet what they will tell me to feed him, I will find out tomorrow.

I will post a follow up on his condition.

(213) Sue says:

January 8, 2012 at 9:54 am

Lyric,

You might try Animals Apawthecary Tinkle Tonic. It seems to work really well for my cats struvite crystals. It is totally natural and it supposedly dissolves the crystals. I tried taking my cat off of it to see if he still needed it and within a week he was straining in the litter box and was only able to produce a tiny drop of urine with blood in it. I started him back on the Tinkle Tonic right away and within a day or two he was able to urinate again.

Good luck with your kitty.

(214) Lyrick says:

January 8, 2012 at 11:06 am

Thank you Sue I will look for that.

Charlie came home yesterday, but I am very stressed! He only urinated twice and very little at a time (about the size of a quarter). I don't know if it's normal?

(215) LyrickThank says:

January 8, 2012 at 11:09 am

Sorry! I forgot to add that he urinated fine yesterday. The two times he urinated was this morning (not in the whole day).

(216) Sue says:

January 8, 2012 at 1:08 pm

I found Tinkle Tonic at a local shop that sells healthy pet food and supplies. You can also find it online at amazon.com and several other places.

(217) Cat Woman says:

January 10, 2012 at 5:33 pm

I had 3 cats block with urinary crystals before I graduated as a Veterinary technologist and here is what I have learned. Ash and magnesium have NOTHING to do with forming struvite crystals,

its all about urine pH. Corn glutean meal is the most common filler used in cat food and causes urine pH in cats to be 7 to 8 (basic or neutral). In the wild cats eating birds and mice have a pH of 6.3 normal for a carnivore. Foods that have any corn will cause crystals in some cats, including Friskies, whiskas, iams, and science diet to name a few. I have operated a cat rescue shelter for 16 years now and we only feed dry food and have NEVER had a cat develop crystals with us. We have had 3 males come in actively with crystals though. We use Champion's "Acana" cat food to prevent the crystals. For those that come in with it the best is Hill's s/d which will drop the urine pH close to 5 for a massive burn out of the crystals. After 4 to 6 weeks you can slowly switch to a corn free diet. Cats may reblock on waltham s/o, hills c/d, or w/d or any other s/o diet. They still have corn in them. If your cat is on a corn based diet, 20% will block during a switch over. The new food didn't cause the crystals, they are already there. Do the s/d before the switch over to "clean " out your cat of those crystals. I'm looking forward to another year of cats with no crystals. Good luck to you all.

(218) Ann Marie says:

January 16, 2012 at 3:40 pm

Have you checked about your cat being allergic to fish?

My Maine Coon, now 17 years old, had crystal issues in his early life. After being diagnosed and treated a second time with crystal blockage in the bladder (blood in the urine), he was diagnosed with allergies to fish.

I read every label of cat food ever since to insure it did not have any fish what-so-ever and he has never had an issue of crystals again. I also fed my cat Wellness dry and am now transitioning to raw prey/bird diet.

(219) Erik says:

January 18, 2012 at 5:06 pm

Hi There,

I have a male cat that is 9 years old. When he was 3 he suddenly developed struvite crystals. He was catheterized 3 times and eventually had to have surgery in order to clear out the crystals. His diet was mainly weight management dry nutro cat food.

After his surgery the vet put him on Hill's Prescription Diet C/D (Which she explained was only to be eaten for several months because it can be hard on his liver/kidney's). After several months he then switched him to Hill's Prescription Diet W/D. Apparently this is less harsh for his system as well as low fat/calories and stops struvite crystals from forming.

I have never had a recurrence of the struvite crystals since I switched to Prescription Diet and we test his urine every year during his checkup. I too am concerned about giving him a more balanced meal, but I won't do so with risking a resurgence of struvite crystals as it can be fatal for male cats. I will consult with my vet the next time I bring him in to see what he says.

Cheers!

(220) Karen says:

January 21, 2012 at 9:01 pm

Have you noticed how many of you have your cat on these holistic diets and they develop crystals? I am not crazy about the ingr. in the prescr. diets either but they work. Save your cat the pain and do what the Dr. tells you. BTW they do not remove all of the magnesium for these foods they remove the excess, which contributes to struvite crystals.

(221) Owen says:

January 25, 2012 at 7:55 pm

Yet *another* family who had relied on Wellness Grain-free foods that has suffered tremendously from FIC / struvite crystals / urethral blockages.

My three year-old male has been blocked over four times in less than three years. He had a

perineal urethrostomy last July after blockage #4 (not only was he prone to developing crystals and blockages, but also anatomically had a very narrow urethra) so that the risk of blockages would be significantly reduced if not eliminated.

He has not blocked since, but the struvite crystals have returned again over the last month.

All of this time, the one thing I haven't changed was their diet (tried C/D for a month and he and his sister ballooned in weight).

I have tried everything from Feliway, to environmental enrichments, active playtime daily, even anti-anxiety meds – which is just beyond bizarre for me.

His sister (and litter mate), has also been prone to what was believed to be infections- and were treated as such even though no urine was tested by my vet (?!?). Now I wonder if she really suffered from crystals.

I can't help but think that Wellness is a very suspicious thread here. I know my boy is a little more sensitive and more easily stressed than most other cats, but after reading through these comments, I think that the food may be a major culprit.

We are just starting to try Royal Canin S/O (canned only).

Wish us luck!

Also, a word of advice: if your cat becomes blocked multiple times in a short amount of time please know that catheterization alone can ravage the urethra. If the vet can drain the bladder to alleviate the danger in some other way and otherwise remove the blockage I would highly suggest that.

(222) Frankies Mom says:

February 7, 2012 at 6:37 pm

I just read most of the comments above and feel that everyone is trying to blame Wellness. I also have a cat that gets crystals and I never feed him dry.....Dry food is a convenience for the owner not the cat.

If it is to much trouble to feed them properly than you should not have a cat or dog for that matter. Dry food is not something they are genetically built to eat.

WET FOOD.....WET FOOD.....WET FOOD.....

(223) Maruko says:

February 14, 2012 at 1:23 am

Medi-cal/Royal Canin Urinary SO just changed their ingredients to be mostly by-products- seriously makes me angry!

My female cat had been eating Innova EVO dry forever and was fine. We got a male cat who got diarrhea from the EVO so we switched to regular Innova dry. Female cat got struvites badly, so we switched to Wellness wet food. 10 months later she got another bout of struvites so we swapped her to Urinary SO wet mixed with extra water and both cats have been on it since with no problems.

It's not the best food but I figured it was a lot better than the Hills or Purina (at least Chicken was the first ingredient). Well today I open a can in our new flat of Urinary SO and I immediately noticed something was off with the texture. I pulled an old can out of the recycling and compared ingredients and they've changed! Now pork by-products is the first ingredient instead of chicken and they've added chicken by-products too. I'm so mad and now I'm not sure what to do. I don't want my cats eating nothing by by-products and corn flour, but I don't want my girl getting struvites again either.

(224) Rico says:

February 14, 2012 at 2:55 am

Maruko,

I suggest you consider asking your vet to order IAMS Urinary S/Low pH/S canned. Here are the first several ingredients in the order listed:

Chicken Broth, Chicken Liver, Chicken, Brewers Rice, Whitefish, Chicken By-Product Meal, Dried Egg Product, Dried Beet Pulp.

Of these 8 ingredients, 4 are very good: Chicken Broth, Chicken Liver, Chicken, Whitefish. And they are very early in the ingredient list, which is ordered from highest quantity to lowest. Yes, this prescription food does contain less healthy ingredients, but I believe it is far more healthy than its Royal Canin and Hills competitors.

(225) Weege says:

February 16, 2012 at 2:49 pm

My 4 year old was on Wellness Core as well. However, I recently started switching over to Innova light because he was a couple pounds heavy.

He had the most beautiful coat with Core. I think switching from a grain free to grain helped exasperate it, but bottom line. NO DRY FOOD.

I've had 3 incidents of cystitis/crystals in the past 4 weeks. \$1000+ bucks later, still trying to figure it out. Go to catinfo.org. This woman deserves to be declared a saint for the info she puts out for free.

Get your cats on canned food ASAP, preferably grain free (wellness, Merrick, etc. Read the labels. No rice, corn, etc.). Of course, ones with complete blockage require special attention.

I started 100% canned food diet last night. Hopefully I'll see some results in the next few days otherwise i don't know what else to do. Bank account is at the limit as is, but more importantly I feel so bad for him because clearly he's in pain.

(226) Lisa says:

February 21, 2012 at 8:05 pm

I also have a cat who was on wellness dry food and has developed struvite crystals!!! How crazy, and wellness is supposed to be a very good and healthy brand! I'm definitely going to switch her immediately. Just not sure which one I will switch to yet. My poor baby! And I thought I was doing right by her with wellness.

(227) franiee says:

March 10, 2012 at 12:32 am

Well, lot's of varied information and experience. My kitty just got over her urinary crystal problem. I used a combination of methods. The Hills C/D food for 3 days (canned) and homeopathy. Each cat is individual, like with people... nothing works for everyone. You can also acidify the urine using natural methods. There is information in the natural pet books, like adding vit C (check the dosage) or certain tea made from herbs which acidify the urine. I agree that removing a nutritional healthy component to 'solve' the problem doesn't change the cats' susceptibility to the problem. Even the reaction to stressors is individual in animals. The importance of treating each animal is key!! Use homeopathy to make the whole animal healthy.

(228) K.B. says:

March 26, 2012 at 2:18 pm

I'm glad to find this page of discussion over natural diets. I've got a male cat at the vet right now who had to be catheterized over the weekend at the emergency vet because he was partially blocked. He does develop crystals and has had UTIs in the past. They'd put him on Science Diet, but he doesn't digest gluten well and vomits any food that has a lot of corn and wheat in it. I feed our cats several grain-free foods, including Wellness, and have some Wellness Core dry available for snacking. From the comments I'm seeing, looks like we may need to cut out the Wellness. One vet I talked to online said they've been seeing crystals in cats that are fed Evo as well, which none of our cats like at all. Soulistic is another that the cats like, and two of the

varieties have shreds of meat in gravy that adds more moisture to their diets. Spot's Stew by Halo is another one that the cats like, and is also high in moisture. I'm looking further to see if there's anything negative about these foods. There's a holistic vet in town I will try to consult with and see if we can work out a diet or regime of supplements to manage this problem.

(229) Sarah says:

March 30, 2012 at 8:20 pm

Wow, this has been a really interesting and enlightening forum. My cat recently developed crystals after switching to a more "natural" food. He used to be on Science Diet Natures Best, and then we saw California Natural (made by Natura) which seemed to have the same sort of ingredients minus vegetables and cranberries. It was also a lot cheaper.

The cats seemed to love it and would lick their empty bowls dozens of times a day. In retrospect, that should have been a warning sign that maybe their bodies were missing something. In any case, within a month of switching, one of our boys (aged four) got crystals.

We had to take him to the emergency vet because it was late, and he ended up staying there for 12 days. He was on a catheter and had an I.V. The cost ended up being over \$4000.

He's still not better, within 24 hours of bringing him home he seemed to be suffering again. We brought him back to the vet to discover that his penis has a small blockage at the tip. So now we have to bring him back to the vet every day to have his bladder drained.

Of course the vet has recommended Hills C/D to dissolve the crystals, which our cat hates (and normally he's a pig and will eat anything we give him). Though apparently he no longer has crystals (just an inflamed penis) so he can eat Hills W/D.

The vet seemed to think that with these holistic foods that they don't have the same amount of testing as Hills. I am weary of playing "God" with my pet. I'd love it if I could give him fresh mice, or feed him raw. I just wish that I could really trust that when the vet recommends Hills it's because it is a good quality food, rather than it being based on sales and profit.

I really wish that companies would produce good quality, highly tested, affordable food that would keep our pets healthy.

(230) sage says:

April 7, 2012 at 9:49 pm

I have 2 cats, male and female littermates about 8 years old. They ate only dry food when I got them at 5 1/2 weeks old. Johnny is overweight and his sister is skinny. She's the one that developed blood in her urine that turned out to be from struvite crystals so large she needed immediate surgery. The vet started them on Canin SO. Frankie then started having blood in her stools. Back to the vet for a diagnosis of colitis brought on by the stress of her hospitalization. Meanwhile, I had taken Johnny in to have his teeth cleaned. A few days later he developed blood in his stools. OK, not stress. Now the vet says they have giardia, though they live inside and drink only city tapwater. Then they stop eating. They had become constipated from one end to the other on the special food. We tried another overpriced dry food. No better, and the bloody stools returned. I spent 2 months wages on their medical care in 6 weeks. I put them back on their previous dry food and the other problems cleared up, but I'm concerned the crystals will return.

From what I'm reading here, special diets, wet food, water fountains, nothing seems to work reliably. And as for the competency of vets, I haven't found anything that says bloody stools are a symptom of giardia. If my indoor cats got giardia, a water-borne infection from well-water not found in municipal water supplies, they more likely got it from lack of adequate sanitation at the pet hospital.

(231) melissa says:

April 25, 2012 at 1:24 am

my cat is 9 .. 2 years ago she got crystals in her bladder, they changed her to Royal Cain SO .. it worked and she hasn't had a problem since, but I have a problem with the price of the bag. I also have Isabel that is 5 and she has an allergy to By Products, she can eat the Royal Cain SO as well, but I can't spend \$100 vet visit and \$65 a bag every two months to keep them on it anymore, sadly, but I do love and care about them so what I started doing (same thing I do for myself) I mix colloidal silver in their water, and I am changing from dry to canned food, and from Royal Cain to Blue Buffalo, all natural food. I hope and pray neither end up with issues from it but in a study Blue Buffalo has less foreign products than Royal Cain does, and you won't need the prescription to buy it .. and a bit cheaper too. Wish us luck!

(232) Patti says:

May 13, 2012 at 2:16 pm

When I told my vet that I had switched Bubba over to grain free food (after surgery, multiple crystal incidents of all kinds, and several stays at the vet), he applauded me. He completely now believes that grain caused the crystal problem, and like me, studied the internet in conjunction with his journals to find an answer. It's not the brand so much, though many brands are better than others, it's the inclusion of grain. He has been crystal free for 6 years. Magically, they disappeared. He is now 15. So people, don't get hung up on the brand...get the grain out of their diets. And feed wet food as the dominant food source. That's my quarter's worth. It saved my cat's life!

(233) Patti says:

May 13, 2012 at 2:30 pm

Okay, I almost left my computer but then I read the comment about Hill's foods, testing and vet recommendations. This comes from three vets that I know (and a few human doctors too)...they sell what gets pedaled to them by the best salesperson! Pet food producers are changing because we the people are looking elsewhere for answers. Their food is making our pets sick! I too went through \$3500 surgery. We are what we eat...and so are our pets!

(234) Beth says:

May 16, 2012 at 9:32 pm

That is very interesting. My cat was on Wellness dry diet food for about 9 months when he got a very large struvite crystal that had to be surgically removed. The vet put him on Royal Canin wet, but like many others I was horrified to see the first ingredient was chicken by-products and it contained corn! So, I spoke to my vet and she said that she could recommend EVO 95% wet food because they had a vet on staff. I've been feeding it to my cat for the past 6 months and he is doing great. However, he is getting sick of that food, so I am looking for alternatives. This is easier said than done. When you look at Wellness, their nutritional info indicates that it should be a good food (protein is high and carbs and magnesium levels are low) – so why have so many of us had problems? I'm currently looking into Evangers. I would love to hear some specific brand names that others have had success with. Of course, now I'm wondering if this is just a Wellness brand problem. My cat has had some dry Blue Buffalo Wilderness when I've gone out of town and has not had a negative reaction to that at all.

(235) K says:

October 13, 2012 at 11:35 am

It is funny that many people here are bashing Hill's, the one company that pretty much revolutionized nutrition in animals. Most of what you are feeding from Hill's is a prescription diet developed for a specific medical reason. Most are recommended for a period of time and then the cat can be weaned back to a maintenance type diet.

Yes cats are carnivores, so if we want to compare what they eat in the "wild" versus in a home lets. But lets compare everything else too. Cats in the wild have a much shorter average lifespan. They may not get as many crystals but they would maybe have been dead long before that. Castration changes the development of the urethra as it ages. If male cats do not get castrated

they would mark their territories (with urine) which would cause them to drink more which would cause them to flush the crystals out more. My cats eat mice a lot that they catch. Maybe a pet store can provide feeder mice for you if they do not catch their own like mine.

To remove struvite crystals you need to acidify the urine (cranberries for the one post who switched), and try to reduce the minerals that are used in the production of crystals. But to do that we still need to make the food capable of maintaining all other functions, and not make it cost prohibitive to the purchaser. Easier said than done. So instead of slamming the companies that did the research (Hill's, Purina, etc.) that the other companies try to bastardize in a diet that they can then say is better, let's do what is best for the animal and forget our petty political correctness crap.

(236) Rico says:

October 15, 2012 at 8:06 pm

K,

I'd have to reread all the posts to make sure, but I think most of the objections to Hill's on this forum have to do with the nutritional profile of their foods rather than anything political.

Personally, I find the nutritional profile of most Hill's selections to be suboptimal for cats.

Specifically, the carbohydrate content is way too high and too many of their selections, if not all, contain by-products, often among the first few ingredients. Such is the case with their struvite formula. The great thing is if you agree with this assessment, you can choose other options. In my cat's case, I've chosen to feed him a combination of canned Innova Evo Turkey & Chicken and prescription canned Iams Low pH, mixed with bottled spring water. He's been on this diet for over a year without any urinary complications. And I believe he will be healthier in the long run. If you disagree, buy Hill's for your cat.

(237) DPMT says:

October 15, 2012 at 10:08 pm

Not sure if you all have heard, but Hills Science Diet recently acquired a patent to use polyethylene in their food products. Polyethylene's purpose is to extend the shelf life of their products. The problem is that it's a common plastic that is widely used to create plastic bottles, plastic bags, plastic film, etc. It can also cause cancer. I found this on the petsitusa web site.

So...since i have a cat who has been on Hills SD W/D for years due to his urinary crystals and his weight, I need to find something else. For the record, he blocked up at age 3 1/2 and had the penile amputation surgery/urethral reconstruction, and now at age 12 1/2, he is still doing great - as long as he stays on the prescription food. I tried putting him on California Natural once and his bladder is so sensitive that if he eats anything other than the Hills SD, his bladder gets irritated and then he starts peeing in the laundry basket. Keep him on the HSD and he doesn't have the problem at all. I also tried some Iams foods and got the same result.

Any ideas?

(238) Rico says:

October 16, 2012 at 3:11 am

DPMT,

I believe it's very possible your concerns about Hill's adding a plastic to their foods may not be warranted. That is, they may not in fact have any plans to add the plastic.

Please type "Hill's polyethylene" into your search bar. Then select the link "Hill's adding a polyethylene (plastic) coating to their kibble..."

This will take you to a forum that discusses this issue along with Hill's recent stated plans to improve the ingredients in their food (thank goodness). You can draw your own conclusions, but after reading through the forum, I have to say I have my doubts that Hill's will be adding plastic to their food in the foreseeable future.

(239) Rico says:

October 16, 2012 at 3:17 am

DPMT,

To clarify, the search bar I referenced in the previous post is a Google search bar.

(240) Kit Kat says:

October 16, 2012 at 12:43 pm

I believe Persian is right on key. It is likely not the Wellness CANfood causing struvite crystals but the amount of Wellness DRYfood that your cat may be consuming. The Wellness canfood has 78% moisture whereas the dryfood has only 11%. While all the literature I've read over the past few days clearly indicates that cats should never be fed dryfood, I will continue to give my cats some dryfood as they do love it BUT in much smaller quantities. My vet also prescribed the Hills Prescription Diet and, like many others on this site, I have grave concerns about the by-products and grains in this product. So, I've decided to try to reduce the amount of dryfood I am feeding my cats by half and double the canfood. Because my cats do not drink much water, I'm also adding a little water to their canfood (not runny but a gravy-like consistency). I also plan to purchase a Glacier Point pet fountain which appears to be very durable and is made of ceramic & glass bottles. Hopefully, this approach will work. If not, I'll be back researching this issue!

(241) Rico says:

October 16, 2012 at 2:25 pm

Please see post #22 by karma and my post #'s 37, 51, and 89. Although this is all anecdotal, I believe these posts raise doubts that the connection between Wellness brand cat foods and struvite crystals is limited to dry food. These are two examples of owners whose cats had struvite issues while on Wellness canned only, although my cat initially developed his problem while on a Wellness wet and dry mix and eventually tested positive for crystals after switching him to a different brand. If your cat has been diagnosed with struvite crystals, you could try a diet of Wellness canned only, but I think avoiding Wellness altogether is a safer approach.

(242) Rico says:

October 16, 2012 at 3:14 pm

Regarding post #241, in post #89 I mentioned I was mixing distilled water with my cat's food. I switched to bottled spring water 2 months after that post (around September 2010) due to controversy over the health risks and benefits of distilled water consumption, which I referenced in post #158.

(243) Lislcat says:

October 17, 2012 at 2:30 pm

Last year, I had a cat that started vomiting and could no longer eat any dry kibble. We had been feeding my three cats Purina One and a rotation of different canned foods. Before anyone objects to Purina One, I had two cats that switched back and forth between Purina One Urinary Tract dry and Science Diet Light Hairball formula, along with 9 Lives canned and they both lived to be 17 years old, so I don't always think that Organic is best. It's what your cats can eat and they enjoy eating, that's important. The cat that I mentioned, that could no longer eat dry, turned out to have cancer in his abdomen. He had cancer remove from his side two years before, so this is not surprising. He was 14. After his passing, I decided to let my other cats go back to eat dry food, along with their wet food. I decided to find what I thought was a great cat food and bought Wellness Complete Health. The cats seemed to like it, but within a few weeks, I noticed that one of my cats was spending a lot of time at the water dish and also in the litter box. I took her to the vet and she had struvite crystals. I got her off the Wellness food and bought Pro Plan's Urinary Health canned food and only fed her that, with water and a little apple cider vinegar mixed in. Once I started the ACV, it only took a day, for the crystals to break up. She started begging for dry food, to the point, that she wanted to eat the dog's kibble. So, I decided to try Uretic, by Wysong and they also told me that I should sprinkle Biotec ph - on her dry food. This works fine for her, but when my other cat eats the Uretic, she vomits. So now, I'm trying to get

my cats stomach to calm down and the only food she seems to be able to eat, without stomach upset is Purina One for Sensitive Systems. She just got into my other cats Uretic bowl and within a few minutes vomited. I guess I have to figure out how they can both have their foods, without letting them eat the other one's food. I'm staying away from Wellness.

(244) Rachel says:

October 25, 2012 at 7:31 pm

I am studying to be Veterinary Technician and I have already learned a lot about the nutritional needs of animals. I am very confident that Veterinarians are well educated on the matter. Also, there is the fact of continuing education, which is necessary for all veterinary technicians and veterinarians to complete a certain number of hours of these conferences annually.

(245) Deb says:

November 8, 2012 at 6:30 pm

I just came back from the vet – my 2 year old male neutered cat had urthra mucus plug blockage and crystals. I fed mine EVO wet and dry recommended by the cats cardiologist – he also has a heart murmur. Now I have to give him S/O food and wet only.....

(246) Baillie says:

November 8, 2012 at 10:40 pm

My girl kitty is just over a year and developed crystals. All I've been feeding her since I adopted her is Wellness Core dry less than 1/4 cup a day and half a can of wet a day. She's also already overweight. Vet wants her on Purina Urinary st/ox for the rest of her life—the ingredients are scary but I'm going to keep her on it until I find something else. Maybe completely eliminate dry food. We'll see how that goes.....Has anyone had success by completely taking out the dry food?

(247) Siri says:

November 17, 2012 at 10:01 am

My cat was on Wellness Core , dry and canned cat food and developed crystals. After being on an antibiotic and Royal Canin S/O the crystals were dissolved. Then I started giving her just the Wellness Core canned and she once again developed crystals in her urine. She is now on Royal Canin Veterinary S/O and no more problems. For those of you thinking it's just the Wellness Core dry that is causing the problems, I heartily disagree. Wellness Core is a problem period and it would be interesting for someone to do some serious research into their cat food to find out why such a "healthy" cat food is causing our cats these problems. I thought I had researched my cat food thoroughly because I wanted my cat to be healthy and after that pet food scare a few years back I thought I was doing the right thing but it turns out I wasn't. I really wish I could find a different cat food than the Royal Canin because those vet prescription foods are incredibly expensive.

(248) Oliver says:

November 23, 2012 at 10:55 am

My 9 year old house cat, Oliver, has always been fed Wellness Indoor, Wellness Core, and Chicken Soup for the Cat Lover brands both dry and canned, with occasional Earthborn and Halo as well. About a month ago he was in the hospital for 3 days for urinary blockage, which was very traumatic for him. He had to be tranquilized, catheterized, etc, they said they did not find any stones but there were crystals and a lot of sediment. The vet of course placed him on the Prescription Hill's c/d dry, I asked for canned also because he has always gotten dry food freely and canned food 2-3 times a day about a spoonful or two at a time. He will eat the dry, not thrilled about the canned, and does not vomit nearly as much with this food, BUT he is steadily losing more and more hair. Almost all of the hair from the insides of his back legs, underneath his tail, and on his belly is gone and now he is losing hair on his sides and back as well. I am afraid he is going bald! I called the vet and told her I thought he was allergic to the grains in the food, as he has been on grain-free his whole life, but she told me she felt that is unlikely and that probably he is losing the hair due to the stress factor of being hospitalized and to keep him on

the Hill's and not to worry, the hair would grow back.

He has always had a beautiful shiny black coat, never any skin or hair issues with the foods I have fed him. I am torn what to do. So, do I go against the vet and take him off the Hill's, put him on canned only, or wait it out knowing that the crystals could come back on the RX diet anyway, there is no guarantee... Thank you for any advice!

(249) Rico says:

November 26, 2012 at 3:49 pm

Oliver,

Maybe you could ask your vet to prescribe a different brand to manage the struvite crystals, such as canned IAMS Urinary-S Plus Low pH. My cat eats this combined with Innova EVO Turkey & Chicken canned and spring water. This IAMS prescription food is a bit lower in carbs than Hills CD. Although it does contain brewers rice and chicken-by-product meal, the first ingredients are chicken liver and chicken. Overall, I think it is superior nutritionally to Hill's CD.

(250) ConcernedOwnerof2 says:

December 4, 2012 at 9:50 pm

I'll add my voice here to those who have mentioned Wellness Core Dry as what they were feeding their cat before the struvite crystals showed up. He also ate a bit of the Wellness grain-free wet here and there, swiping it from my other cat who won't eat anything else.

Out of nowhere, my 4 year old male blocked a couple of months ago, but has responded to his current diet of RC Urinary SO wet. He hates it, and so do I. As someone else pointed out above, the new formulation's ingredients are premium priced garbage in the form of mostly pig by-products and grain fillers!

I'm getting him off of the Rx offal as soon as I can find something else. My vet has refused to help me with an alternative plan, even though my cat has diarrhea, gas, and vomiting from the Rx diets. She wouldn't even look at the ingredient lists when I told her my concerns. Time to find another vet too.

(251) AileenD says:

December 9, 2012 at 9:43 am

My male, neutered cat developed recurring episodes of struvite crystals last summer after I switched ALL the cats to dry Organix food. They all liked it better than wet Wellness brand and I was tired of begging them to finish their food—I was happy to save a little money as well!

Then the frequenting of the litter box, followed up by spraying began occurring. The vet recommended the Royal Canin S/O—NONE of the cats would touch it. So, I went with Hills CD, dry.

Everything was great for a year, then the SAME male cat with struvite crystals started licking himself bald, it started around the area of his back legs and anus. Someone thought his anal glands needed to be expressed, did that—no change.

He's continued to lick his tummy and sides so that now he's mostly bald or patchy. I'm not kidding—this beautiful black cat who has always had the most amazing shiny coat now looks like a cancer victim!

Okay, I thought maybe he's developed a food allergy. Now I'm spending a fortune on Wellness Wet Cat Food for ALL four cats.

Guess what? Now, my poor balding cat is showing signs of struvite crystals again by spraying as he did before.

I'm at my wits end.

(252) Surreal says:

December 24, 2012 at 5:23 pm

I'm really glad I found this page. I must say, however, that I am SO frustrated and annoyed with all the so called "professionals" who make websites stating that kibble is "so horrible". If I were to constantly feed our three cats wet food all the time, their teeth would be in nasty condition.

We've been feeding our cats Blue Buffalo Indoor formula for years now. It was the best decision we've ever made. At one point, I was giving Greenies treats to one of our boys when he was two because his breath could kill a tree! Oh my god! Now, our two boys... if one has something, the other MUST have it, as well. Unfortunately, it did not do well with the older one's system and it caused his pH to go alkaline. Also unfortunate, the Hills did NOT work. After some research, I IMMEDIATELY took him off of it. Carbs, pork fat, constantly hungry and the vet wanted him to stay on JUST that. I did, before my research, put water in with it. When I took him off, I put him back on the Blue with 1/4 tsp of organic apple cider vinegar and water in his morning feeding. He has water in every feeding. Every Sunday they now get raw chicken livers. He started getting better within less than a week!

He's much better now. We just have to help bring his stress levels down. Also, he and our other boy have been fighting too much. I think that once we take care of these issues, he'll be even better and we can cut down the frequency of the APC doses.

(253) Rico DeFelice says:

December 24, 2012 at 5:57 pm

In post #252, Surreal brought up the topic of the effect of canned food on dental health. For a good read on the subject, I recommend going to Dr. Lisa Pierson's catinfo.org website and reading the dental health section. Among many points she makes is that claims that dry food promotes better dental health versus canned food are "grossly overrated, inaccurate, and are not supported by recent studies".

(254) Soulfly says:

December 27, 2012 at 3:33 pm

To post #252 and anyone else who believes dry kibble cleans teeth.....

How come 90% of cats fed dry food have massive tartar buildup by age 3? Dry food does NOT clean teeth anymore than a saltine cracker cleans OUR teeth. In fact, dry food gets broken into little pieces and can get caught between teeth causing decay and bacteria growth. You must brush their teeth or have some form of ongoing dental care. My cat is fed all high quality canned and gets his teeth brushed every night and his teeth are white as the clouds in the sky!

(255) JanaJ says:

January 9, 2013 at 5:14 pm

I had the same problem with my ragdoll as AileenD (comment 251). He had a complete blockage three years ago and we put him on Canin S/O. Within two months he had removed the hair from the base of his tail and in patches near his rear legs on his sides. He had been on Chicken Soup before that. Finally decided the food was the cause (due to corn) and put him on Wellness. Four months later more crystals, but his coat was back to the lushness of before. So on to Hill's S/d for dissolution of the crystals and his coat went again within the month. Vet wanted to put him on C/d, but I figured with corn as the first ingredient, not gonna do it. Tried Iams dry Urinary-S because hoped corn grits would be different - nope. Finally tried the canned version which has no corn and his coat is returning. However, he doesn't really like it alot. I heat it up and spread it out and pamper him into eating one can a day, but he has lost weight. Still he seems happy and active and plays and loves, so we will continue until something better comes along.

At the same time we put him on the S/d, we had our water tested and it came out with a pH8.2, some hardness, sodium, magnesium, phosphorous and arsenic. Tasted great, bad for you. Put in a reverse osmosis system that removes everything and brings the pH to 7, so that probably helped him (and us) too.

(256) Surreal says:

January 22, 2013 at 8:00 am

My cat Reingassi first developed struvite crystals back in December 2011. He was put on the Hills Science Diet C/D dry and the S/D canned. It was tough to get him to eat it, but I did. His struvite levels went UP!

This past October I slowly put him back on Blue Buffalo Indoor Formula. I have also been putting water in his food at each feeding. I gave him 1/4 tsp of apple cider vinegar every six hours with water and a little food. Slowly, it went down to just his morning feeding.

This past Saturday he was crying out, unable to urinate. We took him right to the ER vet. Oddly, everything physically was and is in pretty good shape. The ACV has worked because his urine pH is a perfect 7, very few crystals (0-4/hpf), all blood work values normal, no stones/blockage. He did, however, have concentrated urine and was having urinary sphincter spasms. He came home with meds for that and pains meds.

He's been doing great! What set him back was stress. We have another cat that gets pushy when he's jealous. He's a "me first" kinda' bugger. I've been very sick for the past 3 weeks. My boyfriend doesn't always handle when Rei meows too much and he'll yell at him. All that crap... yet mostly are butthole cat Freddie. STRESS! It's a HUGE factor.

I've done EVERYTHING right for the physical issues. That food was crap and it didn't even work. I'm VERY skeptical about trying this Royal Canin S/O that they wrote a prescription for. I'm more inclined to put him on a Blue Buffalo gain free for a while, still with the ACV in his diet. By process of deduction, the vet and I (regular vet, not the ER vet) found that it was not the food he was on that caused the issue. He had been eating it for WAY too long. His system was introduced to a certain treat and BAM! Bad reaction.

So many people forget that it's not just what physically what goes into our furry babies that effects how they recover – or decline – from any illness.

(257) Mark says:

January 26, 2013 at 9:59 am

So many misinformed people on here. Please ignore all these comments about vets not knowing food or nutrition.

My cat was on Science Diet for years (all dry) no issues whatsoever. I made the switch to Blue Buffalo all wet and a year later he got a UTI. When I made the switch to wet food, he almost entirely stopped drinking water!

After several issues with his UTI on Blue Buffalo, Halo and Wellness, I switched them to Px food dry and wet and is now drinking plenty of water with no issues whatsoever! So don't believe everything you hear or read from the non professionals! Did you know humans shouldn't eat junk food or smoke and some still do?!?! These are the very same people who are telling you not to listen to vets or buy Px food! Educate yourself and research from non biased people and you will see how accurate I am.

(258) Rico says:

January 26, 2013 at 3:28 pm

Mark,

The reason your cat hardly ever drank water while on an exclusively canned diet is that canned food contains anywhere from 70% to 80% water. On the other hand, dry food contains 5% to 10% water. As a result, a cat on an all-canned diet will always have greater water intake than a cat on an all-dry diet because a cat on the dry diet won't be able to drink enough water to make up the difference. I suspect the reason your cat developed a UTI (I'm assuming you mean struvite crystals rather than an infection) was not because of lack of hydration. Rather, it likely occurred because for some reason the Blue Buffalo canned food elevated his urinary pH.

(259) Peggy says:

January 27, 2013 at 11:00 pm

Halo everyone, I am from Hong Kong and please accept my bad english.

My 4-years old male cat got struvite crystals around four months ago.

He is eating Royal canin urinary S/O and he don't eat any Prescription canned food.

After urinary test, He has no more crystals and ph is 6 now.

But a few months ago he seems not ok and took him to the vet.

After many test and no crystals, no stone, The vet told me that he may be Feline idiopathic cystitis (FIC).

I have done many research in the internet, I found two different information about the diet on FLUTD cats:

1) They must eat low protein food. High protein make urine ph higher.

2) Must eat high protein food. Cats need high protein and the urine will be normally acid.

Many of your cats are eating wellness and got crystals.

Wellness is high protein food. Maybe high protein is not good for FLUTD cats???

(260) David says:

January 29, 2013 at 3:45 pm

Mark,

All the Rx dry diets for urinary issues are loaded with salt, which makes them drink more....therefore urinating more, therefore keeping their pipes clean. There are better ways, like eliminating dry altogether, and feeding grain free canned food, to achieve the same results. It takes a little trial and error to find the right foods. Don't listen to vets about nutrition. Most, not all, just push what they have on their shelves, which is usually Science Diet, Purina or Royal Canin. All junk food. Check out catinfo.org for more info from an actual VET.

Read the ingredients on those RX diets, junk!! Sure, humans eat junk food, but if that's all they ate their whole lives...they'd have all kinds of issues! Most cats do "fine" on dry food the first 7-8 years of their lives, then *poof* they block up or have any number of issues. Why? Because cats are designed to eat meat, not dried balls of sawdust (dry food).

(261) Cathy says:

February 1, 2013 at 4:10 pm

After our 7 yr. old male cat developed crystals, I started looking for a replacement wet food (he'd been on Friskies for years, both wet and dry). My cat wouldn't eat the Hill's c/d, so I started searching for an alternative that would accomplish the same goal. I, too, tried Blue Buffalo (liked, but got crystals) and Wellness (same thing). I found two solutions that you might try. First, try the Hill's Mature Adult foods. They come in multiple flavors, including several fish varieties, and have the Magnesium at 0.022, which is below both Blue Buffalo and Wellness at 0.025. He also really likes the Friskies Special Diet (specifically for UTI) foods. It comes in a lot of flavors, but they're hard to find except online. But with Turkey & Giblets, Salmon, Ocean Whitefish (which is the only one you can find in stores), Beef and Liver, and Sliced Chicken and Gravy, he never gets bored now, and his pH is perfect. I've found all the flavors at Amazon and at Petco online.

Just something else to try for those who are still having problems. Good luck!

(262) rob in ny says:

February 2, 2013 at 2:50 pm

i give my cat distilled water. switched him to wellness core WET because of concerns regarding the amount of carbs (grains) in the other brands. now my vet tells me he has blood and crystals in his urine.

(263) Angela says:

February 8, 2013 at 10:21 pm

So many people with this problem, it's a shame. Edwin developed crystals when he was a year

and a half, and since we've had him on those RX diets and I HATE them. Corn meal is the first ingredient. "Here kitty, kitty, have an ear of corn!" What a load of crap. Well lately I think he's starting to realize his food tastes like cardboard. He's picking at it and taking forever to finish it. We have a mouse problem, but the only body we ever found he left in the bathroom and it didn't have a bite taken out of it, so I doubt he's getting a supplemental diet elsewhere. Biggest problem, and it was the same problem we faced when we switched him over that forced me to feed him the RX garbage, he doesn't like wet food. Weird, I know. Really, really weird. So trying that solution is moot. I doubt he'd go for the raw foods either.

My vet actually told me that unfortunately the reason the higher end, holistic companies are unable to provide more foods for pets with specific medical needs is because of some sort of license regarding who can make them. Until this changes, or until those companies start actually caring about the true nutritional needs of animals and not just profit, we will all be in this constant struggle to take good care of the animals we love so much.

(264) patti goodson says:

February 9, 2013 at 5:54 pm

My Kitty rite now is at the vet, He had a blockage. He also has IBS and i have been feeding him Chicken baby food and boiled chicken for the past few years. NO PROBLEMS, i was worried he wasn't getting enough vitamins , like from cat food, so i introduced Wellness Cord Grain free into his diet. No problems along with the baby food as far as the IBS goes. HOWEVER, i now have a 1400 vet bill to pay next week for catheter and flushing and 3 days at the vet. All these pee pee things started after the dry Wellness was introduced. My Daughters friend also said her cat was on the same dry and hundreds of dollars later they are not now. Keep away from it! My vet has my cat on CD at this time and he is doing well no IBS and he is going to the bathroom.

Don't discount what your vet tells you. They have training, in fact my vet is only for Cats for 30 Plus years. Your gut will tell the rite thing.

I totally trust him.

B est to all

(265) Gillian says:

February 13, 2013 at 2:04 pm

My male cat developed crystals 2 months after I got him in 2008. He (and the 2 females) have been on the Purina Urinary St/Ox formula (prescription) since then. They are all thriving...the girls weren't having any problems, but since they all eat at the same time, it was easier to just feel all of them the prescription food. I am however, worried about them getting some meat as the first ingredient listed in the Purina is corn meal gluten. So, I am giving them a tiny bit of EVO wet food as a treat and am hoping to replace the Purina canned food with EVO eventually, and keep them all on the St/Ox dry food. You can get the St/Ox food online....it's much cheaper than having your vet order it and then having to go pick it up from the vet's or the pet store. Yes, you pay shipping, but it's still cheaper than the high price, gas money used and sales tax paid.

(266) Sue says:

February 18, 2013 at 12:21 pm

My 7 year old Maine Coon developed crystals when he was about 3-4 years old. He was passing blood, straining to urinate and when he did he passed very little. I FREAKED!!

I immediately took him to the vet and got an ultrasound. It looked like a snow globe in there. The vet ended up having to do the surgery to remove them.

Since the surgery he's been on Royal Canin SO (both dry and canned). Ever since all his vet visits have showed no crystals at all.

My cat loves his treats but there are none that are safe for urinary health issues. I began making treats from the canned food by dropping on sheet and put into the oven to dry it out. I keep

these in the frig for several days and he thinks he's getting special treats.

(267) Sarah says:

March 8, 2013 at 5:35 am

My 2 year male cat has been taken in twice with a blockage and severe crystals and blood in urine. I have stopped all dry food and biscuits and he is now on Hypovase and wet gravy pouches (Felix). He is back to being a happy cat and no more problems at all.

(268) Terry B says:

March 12, 2013 at 9:28 pm

I had used Iams for years no problem. Previous male cat lived till he was 15. I now have 3 cats. Feed them Iams plus gave them real tuna each night. My male is the only one with crystal issues. Due to having 3, when the vet recommended Hill's CD I switched them all. Once he was given clean bill of health and due to weight gain I changed to over counter Hill's light. No problem for 3yrs. I then started researching more nutritious foods for my cat. Do not care to go the raw diet. I did changed to Nature's Variety Instinct. I was using 1/4, Dry Chicken Meal Formula in the morning. At night a 5.5oz, can of wet Instinct last me 2 days for 3 cats. I always add some warm water to the wet. Due to weight gain I have been mixing 50%, Wellness Inside to their dry feeding.

I believe it started with the Nature's Variety and has worsened with the Wellness. Signs were there. I could be wrong but I wonder if it is also due to increase animal protein. Know it has caused weight gain and they are more lethargic. My cats do go outside. They are around 7yrs old.

If your cat has ever had crystal then you should see some of the signs. I started noticing smaller urine clumps in the littler. Today there are some clumps down to pea size. I have automatic feeders that feed at 6am. Can now hear my little boy getting vocal in the morning after feeding, which I will attribute to him having a hard time going.

All I wanted to do was give my babies a better quality food but isn't a better quality life more important?

We are going to vet tomorrow.

(269) CJ says:

April 9, 2013 at 5:34 pm

I have two sweet cats, one a medium hair domestic of 18 years–Misty, the other a Himalayan of 8 years–Fluffy. Misty has had IBD for most of her life. It hasn't been until recently unfortunately, that I have learned Misty reacts with severe vomiting to any cat food with grains. She has been on prednisone for years to help her. She love Wellness grain free moist food. And she is 100% better. I will try tapering the prednisone.

Fluffy who does not have IBD, recently started vomiting on Royal Canin S/O for struvite kidney stone prevention. So the vet (an excellent vet) and I decided to put her on Hill's ID I believe it was called. Also prevents struvite kidney stones. After a short time, Fluffy began vomiting also on the Hill's. What they have in common in the highest quantity is grains, corn, gluten, corn meal. I wondered at first if Fluffy was also developing IBD. But when I switched her to a grain free food, she immediately, within 12 hours, stopped vomiting. I re-introduced the Hill's for a short time a while later to determine if she would react the same, and she did, ++ vomiting and diarrhea.

I have learned that at least for my two little friends, grains are most definitely a no no. From experience and from research now on-line. It is not a myth that foods containing grains are poorly digested by cats.

My challenge now is to find a grain free struvite preventative diet for Fluffy. Hopefully, a moist grain free food with water fountains to encourage drinking will help her.

(270) Rico says:

April 10, 2013 at 1:37 am

CJ,

Based on my own experience and many of the comments in this forum, I would strongly recommend you do not feed Fluffy any Wellness food, even the canned. There are simply too many testimonies of dry and canned offerings of that brand being associated with the occurrence of struvite crystals, even if a connection hasn't been scientifically proven.

(271) Peggy says:

April 11, 2013 at 11:21 pm

Rico,

Why Wellness will cause these problems?

If my cat do not eat any prescription food, Which grain free can I feed him?

(272) Rico says:

April 15, 2013 at 9:34 am

Peggy,

I have no idea why the anecdotal evidence in this forum seems to indicate a link between Wellness brand cat food and struvite crystals. I don't think it matters. For grain free food brands, I recommend Innova EVO and Merrick. I would stick with the canned versions. Both have a variety of formulas. EVO's 95% line contains no fruits or vegetables. Neither does Merrick's Before Grain line. Both brands are low in carbohydrates, which should prevent weight gain. However, and this is important to note, neither brand has formulations that are specifically designed to prevent struvite crystals. In fact, after my cat developed bladder stones while on Wellness, I put him on Innova EVO Turkey & Chicken canned exclusively. He was fine on that for a couple of months, but then his urine pH drifted back up to 7.5 and crystals showed up in his urine test. Since then, I've given him a mixture of about 60% IAMS Low pH canned prescription and 40% of the EVO. I also add some bottled spring water to the mixture, which I was also doing earlier. It's been about 2 years since I started mixing in the prescription food and he hasn't had any problems.

(273) Rico says:

April 15, 2013 at 9:45 am

Peggy,

I should add that some of Merrick's 5 Star Gourmet Entrees include brown rice. Of the grain free versions, I like Turducken, Thanksgiving Day Dinner, Grammy's Pot Pie, and Cowboy Cookout. In addition to being grain free, these do not contain fish, which some believe contributes to struvite crystal formation. Also be aware that the labels list pearled barley (a grain) as an ingredient. When I called the company last year, I was told that pearled barley was removed some time ago, but that the company is still using old labels on the cans. The company website does not include pearled barley on the ingredient list of any of its cat food formulas.

(274) Hayley says:

April 15, 2013 at 3:50 pm

My 3-yr old Maine Coon just had his first bout with crystals. He had to be catheterized and spent the night at the vets. She put him on ROyal Canin SO wet and dry but I only took the wet after the research I had done, and he likes wet food so it wasn't a problem. I pour a little duck broth on the top to make it more palatable. After what I've read here i'll be very careful when choosing his maintenance diet.

Our vet sent us home with Saw Palmetto to give him in a syringe twice a day. It's an herb with very few side effects that helps them urinate, plus it's liquid so it's doubly good for him right now and not too expensive like medications.

Prior to this happening, he had been eating a lot of seafood, and about half wet half dry food. I

was getting the grain-free but now I realize they just replaced the corn with potatoes so it was pretty high in carbs. Hopefully the information on this forum will help prevent him having this again. Thanks!

(275) Peggy says:

April 15, 2013 at 10:24 pm

Rico,

Oh. Your cat also had crystals while eating EVO !! How come?

How about Nature's Variety Canned food?

(276) Peggy says:

April 15, 2013 at 10:25 pm

Rico,

Oh. Your cat also had crystals while eating EVO Canned !! How come?

How about Nature's Variety Canned food?

(277) Debbie says:

April 16, 2013 at 3:26 pm

Wysong Uretic has saved my cats life.... It is dry but they also haave wet and raw.... I tried royale canine os and hills for struvite crystals but my cat was terribly allergic to corn so.... This has saved my kitty! 2 yrs crystal free ofcourse he dislikes wet. I also bought some sray from food co op for bladder infections or blockage problams. Just my experience.

(278) Rico says:

April 16, 2013 at 10:54 pm

Peggy,

I have no idea why my cat got Crystals while on EVO. Crystals are a mystery. You can do everything right with your cat's diet and he might still get crystals. Some cats continue to get crystals even after being switched to a prescription food. From what I've read, once a cat has this problem, it sometimes can be difficult to cure. A diet change may work for awhile, then it may stop working. As far as Nature's Variety, I really don't have an opinion on that brand. In my case, I tried to avoid a prescription food and my cat got crystals again after some initial success. So I just decided to pick a prescription food that I believed had not so bad ingredients and mix it with EVO. And it's worked so far. I figure my cat gets the health benefits of the EVO and struvite crystal prevention with the IAMS Low pH prescription food. Others in this forum have also made some good suggestions. Whatever you do, just be sure to watch your cat closely and continue to consult with your vet. Make sure you use clumping litter. If your cat starts to go frequently and the clumps are small, get him to the vet immediately.

(279) Betsy says:

April 18, 2013 at 2:48 am

My cat Ginger, had crystals a couple times when she was young, and is now 8 years old. She has been on Purina One Urinary for all that time with no repeat of the struvite crystals. Now she has been diagnosed as diabetic. I tried for a couple weeks to get her onto canned food, but she refused to eat and I was dealing with another (human) health crisis at the time, which is still ongoing. Ginger is pretty fat, so I was very concerned about hepatic lipidosis from not eating while I tried to transition her to canned. I then tried Innova Prime Grain-Free dry for the lower carbs for diabetes, but that was recalled about a week later and is still not back on our stores shelves. So now we are on the Wellness Core Grain-Free Original dry, but after reading this forum I am scared that I am courting another episode of crystals, even though it has been years. My other 3 cats are eating it as well, because with the other issues I am going through right now it seemed the best solution, just to pick one and switch them all. I just don't have time to be the catfood police. They all seem to be higher energy, sleeker, shinier and more active, and eating

less of this denser food. Does anyone have any ideas for a diabetic, crystal history cat who refuses canned food? I think we will go back to the Innova because this discussion has made me nervous regarding the Wellness.

(280) Peggy says:

April 19, 2013 at 3:35 am

Rico,

He don't eat prescription food but only eat Royal Canin S/O dry. I fed him, but he started to go frequently and the clumps are small after 3 months. He got feline idiopathic cystitis and bacteria.

So I will not give him anymore although it is prescription food. It is also dry food.

I am searching some supplements that can help him.

(281) singlma says:

April 20, 2013 at 12:33 pm

Theres a man in a city nearby me. The dr.s told him he had 'terminal cancer' with "weeks to live". He walked out of the office saying to himself, "I'm not buying into a death sentence." He went home and changed his lifestyle. He ate only raw foods, drank water, exercised and went back to the drs. They couldnt believe his cancer was gone. My point in sharing this is...we teach our chidlren to follow adults direction at school, but we dont teach listening to our instincts. Just because someone carries the title "Dr." doesnt make them God or above everyone else-let alone someones instinct. Let's not forget about the late Michael Jackson (RIP) and where his "Dr." is sitting at this very moment.

People, companies today care about money in their pockets, not always humans or animals.

Shared knowledge is a great way for discovery. It appears on here that a certain company is making animals ill, in my opinion, and based on what I read here. It's a shame but knowledge is power.

(282) Laura says:

April 25, 2013 at 6:20 pm

Wow, this stream has taken me hours to read through today (a couple years of followed communication). Thanks to all of your insites/feedback/potential solutions! I am so happy to have found this.

My oldest cat Duke, now 14, had a blockage during the week after we moved in 2008. He was drained and, after \$1,100, put on Hills C/D (+ canned food as more of a treat, rather than a daily feeding), and has been fine crystal free ever since. However, our second kitty, Joey, would not eat the Hills and wasted away to almost nothing for almost a month before giving in. Strange he started getting sneezy within months of starting the Hills! I've asked my vet if he could be allergic to something - I wonder if it's the grains? She said that couldn't be the case.

We now have a 3rd kitty, just over a year now, who has been eating the Hills C/D since she was a kitten. I hate that they are all eating the Hills C/D. I am a little nervous about taking Duke away from what seemed to work for his crystals, but the ingredients in the Hills C/D has me more concerned about the long term health of our babies. I am convinced to switch, so thank you, those who have provided your efforts in transitioning to different foods. I also like the idea of the ACV, which I will incorporate during the transition, as well.

Also, now I know why Joey drinks so much water. He doesn't like any of the canned food we buy and so, aside from his outdoor hunt successes, he only eats the Hills C/D (what he may be allergic too?). Hopefully some of the options I've read about today will be palatble to him - I have taken notes from the posts!

One question I have, some of you have spoken about testing ph of urine. One person posted that she gets testing strips at the pharmacy. Are you simply catching kitty in the act at the litter box and sticking the strip down and catching urine mid-stream? Help with that please!!

Thanks! Laura

(283) Laura says:

April 25, 2013 at 6:46 pm

P.S.

Regarding drinking water – I have a water bowl by the food in the kitchen and a water bowl in our bedroom, where the kitties sleep with us. They NEVER drink out of the waterbowl downstairs – always opting for their “watering hole” in the bedroom. For those who haven’t felt they see their cats too interested in water, perhaps try a special water spot.

(284) Sara says:

May 4, 2013 at 9:24 pm

I fed my 3 cats Wellness wet canned food, then one of my male cat, Meowser, had a struvite crystal problem where he was peeing blood and peeing all over the house. My other 2 cats were fine. But the problem wasn’t too serious yet, so the vet sent us home with some antibiotics and Royal Canin Urinary dry food diet, and told me to come back for a follow up. A look at the horrible ingredients in the Royal Canin dry food and I decided to return the food. Up til then, Meowser was a young rescue that was under a lot of stress due to the environment change from being completely outdoor to completely indoor with people that he’s never met before, so that might have triggered the crystal problem, plus he was skin and bones when we found him. After his diagnosis, I did some research online and purchased book “Natural Cat” by Anita Frazier. I followed her advise on how to deal with struvite crystals–add some Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) into his food to make his pee more acidic and for one week feed him nothing but her chicken broth recipe. I’ve always fed my cats wet canned food, but I think that was still not enough water intake for them. Cats in the wild eat fresh kills that have a lot of fresh blood to drink, compared to our processed canned foods that comes in a solid block. I have a pet fountain that pumps out fresh water, but I hardly see them drink from it due to cats’ natural low thirst drive. I decided to try move away from Wellness because their ingredients include carrageenan.

(285) Sara says:

May 4, 2013 at 9:25 pm

I get alot of advice from catinfo.org. For the past 2 years, My cats are fed fresh raw rabbit/chicken meat and bones that I chop myself with added vitamins as 1/3 of their daily meal, mix of Weruva and Nature’s Logic wet food, and occasional very small amount of Nature’s Logic dry food as treat because one my cat still loves dry food. I feed them 3 times a day and every time I add extra spring water into their food and once every two days I add a small amount of crushed vitamin C pill. All 3 of my cats rarely drink water anymore from the pet fountain because they get enough water in their food. None of my cats have had any struvite crystal problems since and have normal ph 6. I’m not a vet, but from my experience, cats can develop health issues from poor diet, stress (cats can’t deal with change that well), weak genes (too much inbreeding), or lack of nutrition as a kitten.

(286) Peggy says:

May 7, 2013 at 3:14 am

Sara,

Many canned food has carrageenan as I can’t find any best choice. Is it bad for urinary health? I am feeding my cats Natural Balance.

(287) Rico says:

May 7, 2013 at 2:33 pm

Peggy,

Carrageenan is used in many canned cat foods as a thickener and binder. Even a large number of super-premium brand cat foods use it. It is also in many human foods including yogurt, soy milk, and ice cream. Some experts believe carrageenan can cause cancer. Others believe the concern

is overblown.

I don't believe a connection between carrageenan and urinary health has been alleged.

(288) Sara says:

May 10, 2013 at 10:02 am

Peggy,

Rico is right, I've been looking every since I looked into carrageenan and I have yet to find an ice cream brand that doesn't use. I mentioned carrageenan to say that it is the reason why I initially stopped buying Wellness, and not because of urinary health problems. There are new studies out that carrageenan is linked to GI inflammation and cancer. Then there are the others, mainly the manufacturers and FDA, that claim it is safe. I personally don't believe too much in the FDA, so I gave the new studies the benefit of the doubt. I feed my cats Weruva and Nature's Logic that doesn't have carrageenan in their ingredients. Here are some links regarding carrageenan:

<http://consciouscat.net/2012/06/08/carrageenan-should-it-be-in-your-cats-food/>²³

<http://www.drweil.com/drw/u/QAA401181/Is-Carrageenan-Safe.html>²⁴

As for urinary health, you can add some vitamin C periodically to their food to keep their urine more acidic. Also, find foods that's low in phosphorus and magnesium %. Catinfo has a great chart for that. Just make sure it's also low in carbs and high in protein.

<http://www.catinfo.org/docs/FoodChartPhosphorus9-22-12.pdf>²⁵

(289) Diana Gregory says:

May 18, 2013 at 9:50 pm

Interesting. I have been feeding Wellness – *canned* – chicken and turkey for over 10 years. It completely saved a cat with IBD back in 2001.

I haven't used Wellness dry – the Core was not well received. I was feeding Evo dry until last year when I learned they had been sold to P&G. I found out because suddenly the food looked different and the cats were throwing up.

I have been doing the canned in the morning and the dry at night – and have been looking for a replacement for the Evo. All of a sudden, for the first time in 33 years, my one male blocked last Monday. And continued blocking all week. He had a P.U. Friday. I will probably use C/D – I don't *LIKE* using it – but I do want a dry I can trust – and I had another male who had chronic UTI issues until he was on C/D – and lived to be 19.

I would go try Evo again – if they weren't throwing up on it (pre-recall, though that may have been a problem even last year).

Will probably continue with the Wellness canned – it has a lower ash content than a lot of foods – I'll just dilute it a bit more, and use distilled water instead of filtered.

(290) Peggy says:

May 20, 2013 at 11:38 pm

Sara,

It is so depressed for me because a low carbs canned contains carrageenan or any bad ingredients.

Wellness is a low carbs canned but seems like it make cats have FLUTD?

(291) Mary says:

May 21, 2013 at 6:46 pm

I'm confused as to why so many of you are mixing food with bottled spring water as opposed to tap water. As opposed to tap water, bottled waters are not required to meet any standards (and are in fact, usually just tap water, which can be called spring water because most tap water comes from springs). Bottled water has been shown to contain traces of the plastic it is bottled

in, which isn't so great.

Does anyone know of a way to test the PH level of water? Is there a kit?

(292) Rico says:

May 23, 2013 at 7:55 pm

Mary,

The bottled vs. tap water issue is another controversial topic and if you do thorough research you'll find arguments on both sides. I would say confidently, however, that filtered tap water is a more healthy source than unfiltered tap water. To me, the most important thing is that our pets drink plenty of water. So feeding primarily canned food with water added is a great way to accomplish this goal in my opinion.

(293) Frankie D says:

June 9, 2013 at 5:01 pm

Great thread going here – lots of useful info

My 6yo female cat just had a struvite bladder stone removed about a week ago – vet recommended Hills CD canned. Bought both dry and canned this morning and will try dry first and try to get her to eat canned soon. Then I'll try something more healthful than Hills. Before this, she was eating Merrick Before Grain for about a year, before that Wellness Core and regular blend, all dry food,

(294) Brian says:

June 11, 2013 at 6:36 pm

Talk to the RVT in the clinic who orders the prescription and non-prescription foods. They are the specialist in the area of knowing what type of food to use or avoid. Yes, listen to the vet and consult with the RVT.

(295) MerBer says:

June 11, 2013 at 9:55 pm

My female cat had a stone the size of a pecan in her bladder 4 years ago. We had it surgically removed and she was put on the Hill's c/d diet. No problems since then. She will only eat the kibble. But I also feed her about two teaspoons of regular canned food mixed with two tablespoons of water twice a day. So she definitely gets her system flushed!

I would love to get her off the Hill's food because I'm concerned that the ingredients are going to harm in other ways. Plus, I get the feeling that my vet just wants to bleed me dry for money. But would it be detrimental to her bladder health? Part of me thinks the water she gets every day should definitely take care of the pH issue but I'm timid to experiment.

Anyone have some helpful thoughts?

(296) Lori says:

June 13, 2013 at 11:41 am

This is a great thread! It has really helped me gain more knowledge about what to feed my cat. My 4 year old cat developed crystals at a very young age and last year she got a bladder stone. She was on a raw food diet at the time she got the stone but we discovered the medallions I was feeding her had extra minerals added. The vet put her on the Hill's s/d to dissolve it and then the c/d for maintenance. A few weeks ago I noticed blood in her urine. This last spring she had the same problem and when I took her to the vet he said it was because she was stressed out. It did clear up last spring but this time it was getting worse and she was going outside of her box. She has 3 litter boxes and uses them all. After reading this thread and much research on the internet I put her on the chicken Weruva canned food and Wysong Biotic PH-. She was refusing to eat any of the prescription food except the dry. I now have her totally off of dry. She really loves the Weruva food and the Biotic powder. Weruva smells so much better than the prescription food so I can't blame her for not liking it and I like the ingredients in the Weruva.

After feeding her this and adding more liquid to her food she is back to normal again. I am keeping my fingers crossed that this diet works for her. I read the ingredients on the Hill's that she was eating and the first ingredient was rice and the second corn. Grains cause crystals so I'm not sure why it's in the prescription food.

(297) Frankie D says:

June 14, 2013 at 10:22 am

I bought Hills c/d dry and canned for my cat post bladder stone surgery – turns out this former dry-only cat loves the chicken canned c/d. So, despite the not-so-healthy looking ingredients, I'm sticking with the canned c/d for the time being. (Stiches come out this afternoon)

BTW, not so sure which variety Hills c/d you are using – here is the wet canned Hills Chicken flavor c/d ingredient list from the Hills website:

Pork By-Products, Water, Pork Liver, Chicken, Rice, Corn Starch, Oat Fiber, Chicken Fat (preserved with mixed tocopherols and citric acid), Fish Meal, Corn Gluten Meal, Chicken Liver Flavor, Calcium Sulfate, Guar Gum, Fish Oil, Brewers Dried Yeast, Glucose, DL-Methionine, Choline Chloride, Potassium Chloride, Taurine, Cysteine, Calcium Carbonate, Dried Egg Yolk, Glycine, Vitamin E Supplement, Iodized Salt, Potassium Citrate, Thiamine Mononitrate, Zinc Oxide, Ferrous Sulfate, Niacin, Pyridoxine Hydrochloride, Beta-Carotene, Manganous Oxide, Calcium Pantothenate, Vitamin B12 Supplement, Riboflavin, Biotin, Vitamin D3 Supplement, Folic Acid, Calcium Iodate.

(298) Lori says:

June 17, 2013 at 11:39 am

Frankie,

It was the dry Hill's formula that had the grains listed first.

Good luck with your kitty!

(299) Frankie D says:

June 20, 2013 at 8:27 pm

Thanks, Lori

As of now, she's eating wet c/d during the day while she's in the house, and some dry c/d late afternoon before she goes out for the night. I was concerned about post-op weight loss and was trying Weruva cans and pouches but she seems to like the c/d better. Go figure.

I agree that the ingredient list of both the dry and wet c/d look horrible, but she seems OK with it as of now – and my main concern is a good urine output, which is happening.

(300) Fiona says:

July 6, 2013 at 5:10 am

My cat is at the vet right now and he has crystals too ! He has been on hills S Diet for the last seven years ! The vet bill is between 3 and 4 thousand dollars !!! I thought by buying a top quality product my cat would be ok ! Turns out I was wrong ! Hope my baby is ok

(301) Velcro's "mom" says:

July 7, 2013 at 9:10 am

I also dispute the link between Wellness and FLUTD. If 25% of cats as a rule suffer from FLUTD no matter what they eat, and 75% of those cats eat Wellness, most cats with FLUTD will be eating Wellness by default, but will not be ANY statistical indication that Wellness CAUSES FLUTD. All three of my cats ate Wellness. One, who is easily stressed, developed FLUTD, complete blockage, and had to be cathetered to drain (developed FLUTD shortly after the introduction of the third cat to the house). Was placed on a prescription diet – ate it willingly and threw it up fairly regularly. Was eventually placed on the next step – the less restrictive prescription diet. Ate it willingly and did nothing but throw it up immediately afterward; changed brands, same thing, so had to take him off. Went on OTC urinary formulae food. When my mother was dying and the household schedule went wacky a year and a half later – he blocked again, cathetered again.

Told he had to be on totally canned food, prescription preferably. Wouldn't eat the canned prescription food period, so went on OTC urinary formulae canned food. A year later, after having a badly needed teeth cleaning (10 years old and first professional cleaning), was naturally stressed and his COPD worsened (first sign of increased stress) and, a month and a half later, he blocked again and had to have surgery to change him to a female. Bottom line – over time, he's tried practically every suggestion/recommended diet listed above, had lousy results with the prescription diets, and has reblocked each time after stressful events. So, while diet, per scientific studies, does play some role, it appears that it's mostly luck of the draw. If you've got a susceptible kitty, you've got a susceptible kitty. The only suggestion I've not tried, but will be addressing with vet, is prescription to acidify urine, since, even though he will eat the prescription stuff, he then just vomits it up right away.

(302) Velcro's "mom" says:

July 7, 2013 at 9:27 am

Oh, and p.s., in researching to see if there was a "better" prescription diet out there, I found that Waltham and Royal Canine are one and the same. Was hoping it was a new prescription diet brand where Velcro might have better luck, but they are just the people who produce Royal Canine food. Sigh. I pray the surgery helps no matter what diet he ends up on, because otherwise I'm going to feel awful about having put him through "sex-change" surgery for no reason. If he blocks again, I will NOT allow him to go through more suffering and will have him euthanized – which will just about kill me since he's the first pet I've ever had. Keep posting, guys, because I'm hoping see a post of something we haven't tried that has worked for a significant period of time – i.e. at least three years.

(303) Petes mom says:

July 7, 2013 at 3:49 pm

So glad I found this since my four yr old male Pete is having issues again just after taking him two weeks ago to the vet for crystals.

I have feed my 5 cat herd Holistic Select grain free dry for years, along with raw & partially cooked chicken & turkey, Holistic Select can, FF can.

Has anyone else fed Holistic Select dry Chicken recipe before? I have learned it is under the Wellness umbrella, it is made by WellPet. I have never fed Wellness anything but now wonder how different it is from Wellness?

My vet gave me Clavamox drops and Hills prescription dry & can to feed him. Pete will not eat it in any form and he is already thin....I have to get him to eat something, his appetite is only a few bites of food. I am returning the Science diet since he will not eat it.

I am going to Whole Foods today to get raw apple cider vinegar & D-mannose to try with him. I will also see if he will eat Wysong Uretic.

Some of my kits will not eat raw but Pete has always been a good eater of raw chicken....not on a daily basis but several times a week.

I have always thought I was feeding my kits a healthy diet, I have had all healthy females with this diet.

Pete is the only male, he may have a stressed immune system....I want to try a holistic approach to fix this rather than antibiotics, which so many vets prescribe. I want to prevent this from happening again VS more vet visits & more antibiotics which arent fixing the problem or are a healthy solution.

(304) Rico says:

July 7, 2013 at 7:45 pm

Velcro's "mom",

Please review my #89 and #112 posts. My cat has been in great health and has had no urinary setbacks since I put him on his current regimen in July 2010 (3 years ago). To review, here's

what he's getting:

1. IAMS Low pH prescription canned
2. Innova EVO Turkey & Chicken canned
3. Bottled spring water (filtered tap water is also a good choice IMHO)

I mix the 3 together. About 60% of the food is the IAMS prescription canned. In post #89 I indicated that this IAMS prescription food's caloric content was 12% carbs. At last check, that number has risen to 18%. However, the EVO is 4% to 5%, so the combined number is still fairly low. Many cats, including mine, need a low carb diet to avoid obesity.

Worth a shot anyway, unless you've already tried this IAMS prescription food and achieved poor results. Stress management is also very important as you've indicated.

(305) Rico says:

July 7, 2013 at 11:46 pm

Velcro's "mom",

To correct what I've detailed in post #304 (after reviewing my earlier posts from 2010), I changed from distilled water to bottled spring water in September of 2010, which is about 2 years and 9 months ago. My cat wasn't having problems with the distilled water as far as I could tell, but I decided to make the switch due to the mixed opinions regarding the safety of long term intake of distilled water.

(306) Velcro's "mom" says:

July 8, 2013 at 4:26 am

Thanks, Rico! I found three more FLUTD diet foods today, one of which was Iams. The other two had "garbage" ingredients like what Velcro tried in the past. At least, reading the Iams, among the first ingredients was actual meat!! My vet does not carry the Iams, but I will definitely be pressuring him to write a scrip for it and I'll order on-line. I'll budget REALLY carefully, because my cat's a large cat (occasionally mistaken for a Main Coon) who ate \$65.00 – \$70.00 worth of non-prescription canned cat food a month BEFORE he had any troubles. He already drinks bottled water, and I'd just started mixing extra water in his canned food . . . the day before he plugged up again (too late!). The biggest issue will be keeping his stress levels down (more walks, pheromones, and a totally separate eating area, here we come). P.S. the big thing the most popular prescription diets brag about for struvite crystals, of course, is how low they are in magnesium. But Friskies off-the-shelf urinary diet actually has less magnesium than those prescription foods and less than one-quarter the cost. Go figure.

(307) Rico says:

July 8, 2013 at 1:52 pm

Velcro's "mom",

Glad to hear you're going to give IAMS Low pH prescription canned a try. My vet doesn't carry it either, but she orders it for me. As far as I know, any vet can do that. Here's another tip. If your cat turns his nose up to the food, try sprinkling a little parmesan cheese on it. Works like a charm!

(308) Rico says:

July 8, 2013 at 2:07 pm

Velcro's "mom",

My cat looks like a Maine Coon too, although he's only about 12 pounds. He's 13 years old and used to weigh 16 1/2 pounds until I got him off dry food and substantially reduced his carbs.

(309) Lori says:

July 9, 2013 at 11:34 am

Velco's "mom", so sorry to hear about your kitty.

So far Natural Balance Catatouille and Weruva chicken and pumpkin canned food is what is

working for my cat. I also add more water to her food and she gets a teaspoon a day of the Wysong PH-.

I also bought some LifeMate cat litter to monitor her PH level since I am giving her the powder to acidify her urine.

(310) Rico says:

July 9, 2013 at 2:19 pm

Lori,

It's probably a good thing you're using Wysong PH to acidify your cat's urine. That's because pumpkin tends to make urine more alkaline.

(311) Lori says:

July 10, 2013 at 2:44 pm

Rico,

She has only tried a few cans of the pumpkin within the last 3 weeks so I don't believe this food has been a problem. She prefers the Natural Balance anyway. So maybe I won't be doing the pumpkin.

I didn't realize it would make her urine more alkaline though. I know it's great for dogs if they have digestive problems. Speaking of, my dog now has some bladder issues just after I cleared up my cat's. It's never ending...

(312) Rico says:

July 11, 2013 at 3:36 pm

Lori,

There are many websites that have acidic/alkaline food charts. Acidic foods will make your cat's urine more acidic. Alkaline foods will make your cat's urine more alkaline. Of course, to prevent struvite crystals, you want to feed your cat mostly acidic foods, primarily meats.

Here is a pretty good example of one of these charts:

<http://www.acidalkalinediet.com/Alkaline-Foods-Chart.htm>²⁶

One of the problems with these charts is many conflict with each other when it comes to specific foods. I've seen foods rated as acidic on one chart and alkaline on the other. But for the most part they are fairly consistent.

On most of the charts I've seen, pumpkin is considered to be moderately alkaline, so it probably won't alkalize urine all that much.

(313) notgoodenough says:

July 11, 2013 at 3:57 pm

This is my attempt to try and put across my somewhat lengthy, but healthwise intentioned, thinking behind dry food concerns. Take some coffee before you read 😊

For the last year I have, occasionally tried to sift away the pointless parts of the dry food vs wet food discussion and look at some basic logic. Many scientists are out there in this world.

Shouldn't be too hard to comment or fix my thinking. I don't care if I'm proven wrong on some of my thinking, as it means someone who does know has chosen to clarify a credible science.

Does anyone here monitor their cats liquid water intake. Do you ever do a start and end of day weighing in ml? Do any of you have any idea at all? I don't either.

I can glug 1 litre of water in 5 minutes in the summer when I'm well overheated. Excessive perhaps but it never hurt me.

Take a cat that weighs 4kg, if it is 80% water, it contains 3.2 litres of embodied water. It's balance is very important. It needs water to keep all functions going efficiently. If urine becomes too small a quantity, it will automatically be more concentrated and bacteria can ingress over time as there is less flushing etc..

For anyone who has had dealings with urinary catheters for humans, you will know that drink drink is a standard mantra.

Citric acid aka citrate and increased water is always important for catheter users, especially in-situ as the bacteria can colonise the catheters and for anyone who is not using any device that simulates bladder expanding subsequent emptying as high velocity, they can develop increased calculus, encrustation easily as they might drink less for various reasons.

I had a suprapubic catheter for a year and I generated some crystals/stones over time ughh. If you take lots of citrate, as a human, you can keep catheters pretty damn unblocked.

(314) Theresa Chance says:

July 11, 2013 at 9:18 pm

This thread is amazing! I started out many hours ago researching struvite crystals in cats and began reading all the comments; I also made notes along the way just in case I'll need to reference something. On a different note, my cat, Gerdie, is 4 1/2 years old and so far is in good health with no signs of any crystals.

As a kitten, she was fed primarily a dry food diet of Royal Canin until she was about 2 1/2 yrs. old and then, due to cost, she was switched to the less expensive Hill's Science Diet up until a year ago. I did some research online and decided to change Gerdie's diet to mostly wet food.

Currently, I feed Gerdie twice a day wet food and rotate the following brands for variety: Weruva canned (no fish kind), Fromm's Four Star canned (all 4 varieties contain fish), Go! Natural (Fit+Free & Sensitivity+Shine), and Halo Spot's Stews (no fish). I also leave out for free-feeding in the evening about a heaping tablespoon of dry Wellness Core mixed up with a bit of Blue Wilderness Dry. I also give her Feline Greenies and Smart-Bites as treats; the ingredients are not the greatest, but they are meant to be just that — treats. She's not much of a water drinker even though I place bowls in her path; sometimes, I think she just doesn't like the tap water.

After reading this entire thread, I think I'll scrap the Wellness Core dry and switch to Fromm's Dry or Go! Natural. Also, I'll save up for a stainless steel water fountain in the hope that Gerdie will drink more water. Starting off the way she did with eating only dry food, I hope that my pet will not suffer with the onset of crystals in the future. My heart bleeds for all you wonderful and devoted and caring pet parents out there who want nothing but the best for their "babies" and who have had to endure their pets' pain.

My best wishes for health and happiness to you all and your darling pets!

(315) Heather says:

July 23, 2013 at 3:25 pm

I have spent thousand on my Maincoon and did my own research after the Vet couldn't give me good answer. I have him on Hills CD formula and every morning and evening I give him a 1/4 can of Grain free wet food so half a small can a day. I found if I give him to much wet food he has terrible Diarrhea. It's now been 5 years without a problem.

Good luck to everyone.

(316) Robert says:

July 31, 2013 at 7:36 am

I found this study and it states low carbs and add non-soluble fiber to their diet:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14974568>²⁷

Robert

Links in this article:

1. <http://vetmedicine.about.com/b/>
2. <http://vetmedicine.about.com/gi/pages/shareurl.htm?PG=http%3a%2f%2fvetmedicine%2eabout%2ecom%2fb%2f2006%2f01%2f20%2fgood%2dfood%2dfor%2dcat%2dwith%2dstri%20Food%20For%20Cat%20With%20Struvite%20Crystals%3fzItl=Good%20Food%20For%20Cat%20With%20Struvite%20Crystals%3f>
3. <http://vetmedicine.about.com/b/2006/01/19/new-updates-pet-parasites.htm>
4. <http://vetmedicine.about.com/b/2006/01/20/why-is-treatment-for-tapeworms-different-than-other-worms.htm>
5. <http://www.catinfo>
6. <http://www.catinfo.org>
7. <http://www.catinfo.org>
8. <http://www.halopets.com/pet-education/pet-articles/feline-urinary-problems.html>
9. <http://www.catinfo.org>
10. <http://www.halopets.com/pet-education/pet-articles/feline-urinary-problems.html>
11. <http://www.catinfo.org>
12. <http://binkyspage.tripod.com/CanFoodNew.html>
13. <http://binkyspage.tripod.com/CanFoodNew.html>
14. <http://binkyspage.tripod.com/CanFoodNew.html>
15. <http://binkyspage.tripod.com/CanFoodNew.html>
16. http://mpmproducts.co.uk/applaws_cat_product_information.asp?in_section=applaws
17. <http://www.naturesvariety.com/InstinctRaw/dog/orgchicken>
18. <http://blog.foodfacts.com/index.php/2009/06/01/msg-exposed-where-is-it-hidden/>
19. <http://www.daystarbotanicals.com/nutritionalyeast.html>
20. <http://www.advancedhealthplan.com/msgstudy.html>
21. <http://itchmoforums.com/pet-food-questions-and-researching-foodsingredients/yucca-schidigera-extract-some-questions-t4302.0.html>
22. <http://www.catinfo.org/>
23. <http://consciouscat.net/2012/06/08/carrageenan-should-it-be-in-your-cats-food/>
24. <http://www.drweil.com/drw/u/QAA401181/Is-Carrageenan-Safe.html>
25. <http://www.catinfo.org/docs/FoodChartPhosphorus9-22-12.pdf>
26. <http://www.acidalkalinediet.com/Alkaline-Foods-Chart.htm>
27. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14974568>