

Feline Hunger Strike

PURPOSE

This document defines the policy and procedures for properly caring for cats on feline hunger strikes.

Within a few days of not eating, or not eating enough, a cat can acquire hepatic lipidosis, a life threatening liver disease. Any cat at any age is at risk for this disease, but it is most commonly seen in middle-aged, overweight cats that drop weight too quickly.

Signs include anorexia, dehydration, drooling, vomiting, and jaundice (skin turning yellow). By the time skin yellows, this is a medical emergency requiring immediate veterinary care. Prevention is the best way to avoid hepatic lipidosis.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all APA! staff and volunteers responsible for caring for cats on feline hunger strike.

POLICY

APA! staff and volunteers will care for cats on hunger strike in accordance with the documented procedures.

PROCEDURES

1. 12 Hours of Not Eating or Eating Less Than 50% Normal Ration

- Offer the several bowls of special foods (buffet) and record the current weight.
- The special foods that may encourage eating are Baby Cat kibble, Purina Healthy Weight kibble, smelly wet foods (both a fish based and chicken based), chicken baby food, Purina Party Mix treats.

2. 24 Hours of Not Eating or Eating Less than 50% Normal Ration

- Submit an illness alert, indicating how long it's been since the cat has eaten, how much the cat has eaten, and today's updated weight.
- Continue to offer a food buffet and take measures to reduce the cat's stress in the cattery.

3. 48 or Longer Hours of Not Eating or Eating Less than 50% Normal Ration

- Take the cat to the clinic indicating how long it's been since the cat has eaten, how much the cat has eaten, and today's updated weight.
- Report this, in person, to a veterinarian or the clinic manager, and deliver the cat to them directly.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For questions regarding this policy, contact document owner.