

Helpful tips for encouraging appetite in sick kittens and puppies

With some illnesses and GI problems, we can see a lower or absent appetite. This may be because of the symptoms of the illness (like congestion with respiratory infections) or related to actual nausea. Your foster pet should be eating at every meal and puppies/kittens should be eating full meals, or eating their normal amount. If you see them not finishing their normal amount or not eating at all, please contact us. We will probably need to see them for a sick foster appointment and give medications to encourage appetite.

What can you do at home to help sick little ones eat?

- Try not to change foods unless asked to do so
 - Changing foods can cause tummy upset and may worsen symptoms
 - You can offer a different flavor in the same brand of food
 - In some cases, we will have you change food to something more appetizing
- If the food has been sitting out for a couple of hours, please throw it away and get fresh food
 - Wet food should be thrown away if it hasn't been eaten within 3 hours
 - Any opened containers of wet food should be kept in the refrigerator to prevent food spoiling
- Slightly warm wet food in the microwave before feeding
 - Warm food for 5 seconds in the microwave and stir well
 - Stirring helps prevent pockets of scalding hot food which can burn mouths
 - Do not warm for over 5 seconds to avoid making food too hot and mouth burns
 - You can also add a small amount of warm water to make extra gravy
- Offer a separate plate of food with fortiflora sprinkled on it
 - For most animals, fortiflora is a tasty treat due to added flavor enhancers
 - Some cats and dogs don't like the taste and will avoid eating food with fortiflora on it
 - We always recommend offering food with and food without fortiflora until we know if your foster babies like the taste
- Offer a few tasty treats broken into small pieces to help kick start the appetite

Please contact us immediately if your foster isn't eating well and is lethargic. Puppies and kittens can develop low blood sugar quickly from not eating and this can become an urgent situation.

Foster Cell: 919-630-9680 **Email:** abroughton@spcawake.org

The Foster phone is always on and with a SPCA staff member. You can also text, send pictures and videos to this number for any concerns!

