

# Foster Guidelines ( newborn to 5 weeks old)

Thank you for fostering! The information provided below will get you and your kitten(s) off to a great start. Please let us know if you ever have any concerns or questions.

AID	Name	Description	Today's Weight

## Feeding Instructions:

### **Bottle kittens**

Follow [Maddie's Fund Kitten Bottle Feeding and Stomach Capacity Chart](#) for the correct amount of formula for the kitten's age. Bottle fed kittens should not be fed more than what's outlined on this chart. Overfeeding a kitten can lead to stomach upset and vomiting.

Always measure and keep track of how much formula the kitten is eating at each meal. If the kitten is not eating the recommended amount contact the foster phone, 919-630-9680. Kittens under 4 weeks of age are very fragile and if they are not eating the recommended amount it can be an emergency quickly.

### **Special instructions**

- Add a pinch of Fortiflora to formula
- Use Miracle nipple
- Use bottle
- Use syringe
- KMR formula
- Breeders Edge formula
- Esbilac formula
- \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*Always keep mixed and unmixed formula in the refrigerator

### **4-5 week old kittens**

**Dry:** 1/8 cup of Mother and Babycat kibble fed 2 times daily. If they do not show interest in regular kibble, it can be soaked for 15 minutes and then mixed. Kittens this small will eat wet food better than dry. All uneaten soaked kibble should be thrown out at your next feeding.

**Wet:** 1/4 - 5.5oz can or 1/2 - 3oz can of wet food gruel should be offered 3-4 times a day. You will need to reduce bottle feeding when transitioning to wet food. All uneaten food should be thrown out at your next feeding.

**Making gruel:** Mix 1/4 can of wet food with 1 ounces (2 tablespoons) of warm water. It is okay to make gruel in bulk and refrigerate it, but you'll need to warm it before offering it to the kittens. Microwave for 6 seconds and stir well making sure it is warm with no hot spots.

## Transitioning kittens

Kittens are used to suckling for their food. It will take a little time for them to understand how to eat wet and dry food from a plate.

### 3-4 weeks

Mix a small amount of wet food into formula bottle. This will allow their stomachs to adjust and will reduce the possibility for stomach upset.

### 4-5 weeks

Make wet food gruel and place on a flat plate. You may need to use the back of a spoon to bring the food closer to the kitten's mouth. They are not used to lowering their head for food. You can also place a small amount of wet food on their nose and mouth. Once they understand what you are offering is food, slowly move the spoon down to the plate. Kittens will be very messy during this stage. Allow them to explore and discover the food. Just make sure to clean them up afterwards.

Some kittens take longer than others to figure it out. Be patient with them and keep trying. Remember to avoid sudden food changes as this can lead to vomiting/diarrhea.

**Water** must be **easily accessible** at all times. Please use a moderately shallow bowl (kittens should be able to easily reach head over lip of bowl to drink). Verify water is clean daily.

### Weighing Instructions:

Kittens should be weighed every day. If you do not have a kitchen scale and are able to purchase one please do so, this is an essential tool when fostering. If any of the foster kittens are not gaining weight or are losing weight please call the foster phone, 919-630-9680. Kittens under 5 weeks of age can become critical quickly.

**Kittens should gain 4oz per week or approximately ½ ounce per day.**

2 weeks old = 1/2 lb. (8 ounces)

4 week old kitten = 1 lb. (16 ounces)

\*Kittens size may vary if they were malnourished before arriving but kittens should never lose weight or go more than a day without gaining any weight.

**Let us know if you notice any of the following:**

- Not eating
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Sneezing/coughing
- Discharge from eyes or nose
- Excessive crying
- Not playing with siblings
- Lethargy
- Limping
- Any abnormal behavior
- Weight loss

**FOR ANY MEDICAL ISSUES OR EMERGENCY:  
Please call/text 919-213-1935**