

Frequently Asked Questions

Question

Are there any contraindications for the product?

Answer

Growing kittens, pregnant or nursing cats

Question

Will there be a compatible treat available?

Answer

There is not a low-iodine treat available at this time. It is critical that owners avoid feeding any additional foods or treats to hyperthyroid cats being managed with Hill's® Prescription Diet® y/d™ Feline Thyroid Health to avoid compromising the food's effectiveness. Owners who want to treat their cats should be encouraged to use canned food as a "treat."

Question

What is the shelf life for unopened dry and canned product?

Answer

24 months for dry or canned product

Question

What is the shelf life for opened product?

Answer

When dry product is stored as recommended in a cool dry place, it can be fed up to the Best Before Date.

Question

Will cats become hypothyroid while eating this food?

Answer

In all of our studies to date, hypothyroidism has not occurred in hyperthyroid or healthy cats when fed y/d. If this occurs in hyperthyroid cats while receiving concurrent anti-thyroid medication, discontinue the medication.

Question

What is the feeding recommendation for cats with concurrent diseases?

Answer

Chronic kidney disease is the most common concurrent condition of hyperthyroid cats. Similar to therapeutic renal foods, y/d contains controlled amounts of protein, phosphorous and sodium, and is supplemented with omega-3 fatty acids. It may, therefore, be used for managing cats with hyperthyroidism and chronic kidney disease.

Diabetes mellitus may also occur in cats with hyperthyroidism. Nutritional therapy is also a cornerstone of the management of type II diabetes in cats. Recent studies suggest foods that contain 5% to 26% of calories from carbohydrates help maintain glycemic control in diabetic cats.¹⁻⁵ The percent of calories from carbohydrates in y/d (23% dry, 24% canned) fall within these guidelines.

For any patient with multiple diseases, the clinician must weigh the pros and cons of managing each disorder and decide which one has the greatest impact on longevity and quality of life. Additional information and recommendations for nutritional management of complicated clinical cases is available from the Hill's Veterinary Consultation Service. This service provides free total case management, nutritional counseling and product support for veterinary hospitals. The Veterinary Consultation Service can be contacted by phone at 1-800-548-VETS (8387) or by e-mail through the HillsVet.com website.



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Question

Hyperthyroidism has potential to mask kidney disease. Will the nutritional profile of y/d also aid in lessening the clinical signs of kidney disease?

Answer

Chronic kidney disease is a common concurrent condition in hyperthyroid cats and effective management of hyperthyroidism may unmask kidney disease. Amounts of protein, phosphorus, and sodium and omega-3 fatty acids in Hill's® Prescription Diet® y/d™ Feline Thyroid Health are similar to Hill's® Prescription Diet® g/d® Feline Early Cardiac-Healthy Aging, a food that Hill's recommends for early stages of kidney disease. To date, we have not observed a sudden worsening of renal function (based on evaluation of serum chemistries) in hyperthyroid cats once they are eating y/d. Instead, serum creatinine often decreases after hyperthyroid cats transition to y/d; additional studies are needed to determine why this occurs. Because each patient is unique, we recommend calling the Hill's Veterinary Consultation Service for advice on managing hyperthyroid cats with concurrent disorders.

Question

If my patient eats another iodine source, when should I become concerned?

Answer

You should be concerned if T₄ values exceed the normal range. It is expected that cats from time to time may consume iodine from another source (e.g., prey, food of another pet in the house, human food, etc.). These "slips" should not cause problems if they occur infrequently, similar to what would be expected if a cat being managed with anti-thyroid medication misses a dose or does not swallow.

Question

What causes hyperthyroidism?

Answer

At this time, the cause is unknown. A variety of risk factors have been identified for hyperthyroidism in cats and these studies show an association between the disease and the risk factor. However, they do not confirm a cause-and-effect relationship. Additional study is indicated to identify the cause(s) of hyperthyroidism.

Question

Can y/d be used to prevent occurrence of hyperthyroidism in cats?

Answer

Since the cause of hyperthyroidism is unknown, there is no expectation that limiting iodine intake will prevent the development of the disease. To date, there have been no clinical studies to support that iodine intake levels (high or low) cause hyperthyroidism.

Question

Why is there an ingredient difference between the dry and canned forms?

Answer

Canned and dry foods often have different ingredients, but Hill's takes great care to ensure the nutritional profiles are similar. The manufacturing process does not always make it possible to use the same ingredients. Dried foods must have some ability to stick together and form kibbles, whereas canned products do not.

Question

What is the source of the liver protein?

Answer

The source of liver protein is pork liver.

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Is y/d Feline being promoted as a cure for hyperthyroidism and a replacement therapy for radioactive iodine based on the claim that it “improves/restores thyroid health?”

Answer

No. Hyperthyroid cats that eat y/d Feline are restored to a euthyroid state, based on normalization of thyroid hormone concentrations and control of their clinical signs. Like medication, y/d Feline is positioned as management, not a cure.

Based on results of our clinical studies conducted over the past 10 years, y/d Feline is a safe and effective option for medical management of cats with hyperthyroidism.

We suggest that all therapeutic options should be discussed with owners of hyperthyroid cats so they can make an informed decision with advice of the healthcare team.

Question

It appears that some hyperthyroid cats managed with y/d Feline have total thyroxine (T₄) concentrations in the upper end of the reference range. Is that adequate to control hyperthyroidism?

Answer

Yes, as evidenced by multiple clinical studies using reduced iodine food in hyperthyroid cats.[†]

In addition, nutritional therapy with y/d Feline results in mean total T₄ concentrations that are comparable to traditional forms of therapy.

Reported Total T ₄ Concentrations in Hyperthyroid Cats		
Treatment	Short-Term	Long-Term
y/d Feline	3.2 µg/dl (range 2.0-4.8) at 6 weeks	1.5 µg/dl [†] at mean of 15.5 months (range 10 to 36 months)
Anti-thyroid drugs Radioactive Iodine	2.4 µg/dl* (range 1.3-4.5) at ≤ 6 months	0.93 µg/dl (carbimazole) at 53 weeks

[†]Data on file

*Combined mean total based upon 7 published studies⁶⁻¹²

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Question

Is y/d Feline iodine deficient?

Answer

No. Based on 10 years of research with naturally occurring feline hyperthyroidism, y/d Feline has the optimal level of iodine needed to effectively manage this disease.

Over 150 hyperthyroid cats have been studied in the development of a limited-iodine food for managing hyperthyroidism. Of these, 108 cats have been housed at the Global Hill's Pet Nutrition Center and they have been managed effectively with nutritional therapy alone, some for more than 5 years.

Question

Is y/d Feline protein deficient? Is there enough animal protein to meet the cat's protein requirements?

Answer

Based on multiple feeding studies and protein intake recommendations established for cats, the amount of protein in y/d Feline (34-36% dry matter) is more than adequate to meet the nutritional needs of cats, including maintenance of lean body mass (muscle).¹³⁻¹⁵

The quality of protein should also be considered when evaluating a pet food. It's not the protein source (animal or plant) that determines its quality, but whether the protein supplies the necessary amino acids. The protein found in y/d Feline is of high biological value and provides all the essential amino acids needed by cats.

To meet the nutritional needs of cats, dietary protein must be absorbed and digested. The protein digestibility of canned and dry y/d Feline is very high (90%) and animal feeding tests using AAFCO procedures substantiate that y/d Feline provides complete and balanced nutrition for maintenance of adult cats.

¹Frank G, Anderson W, Pazak H, et al. Use of a high-protein diet in the management of feline diabetes mellitus. *Vet Ther.* 2001;2:238-246.

²Marshall R, Rand J. Insulin glargine and a high protein-low carbohydrate diet are associated with high remission rates in newly diagnosed diabetic cats (abstract). *J Vet Intern Med.* 2004;18:401.

³Mazzaferro EM, Greco DS, Turner AS, et al. Treatment of feline diabetes mellitus using an alpha-glucosidase inhibitor and a low-carbohydrate diet. *J Feline Med Surg.* 2003;5:183-189.

⁴Weaver KE, Rozanski EA, Mahony OM, et al. Use of glargine and lente insulins in cats with diabetes mellitus. *J Vet Intern Med.* 2006;20:234-238.

⁵Bennett N, Greco DS, Peterson ME, et al. Comparison of a low carbohydrate-low fiber diet and a moderate carbohydrate-high fiber diet in the management of feline diabetes mellitus. *J Feline Med Surg.* 2006;8:73-84.

⁶Frenais R, Rosenberg D, Burgaud S, et al. Clinical efficacy and safety of a once-daily formulation of carbimazole in cats with hyperthyroidism. *Journal of Small Animal Practice* 2009;50:510-515

⁷Mooney CT. Radioactive iodine therapy in feline hyperthyroidism. *The Veterinary Record* 1990;127:555.

⁸Peterson ME, Kintzer PP, Hurvitz AI. Methimazole treatment of 262 cats with hyperthyroidism. *J Vet Intern Med* 1988;2:150-157.

⁹Sartor LL, Trepanier LA, Kroll MM, et al. Efficacy and safety of transdermal methimazole in the treatment of cats with hyperthyroidism. *J Vet Intern Med* 2004;18:651-655.

¹⁰Trepanier LA, Hoffman SB, Kroll M, et al. Efficacy and safety of once versus twice daily administration of methimazole in cats with hyperthyroidism. *J Am Vet Med Assoc* 2003; 222: 954-958.

¹¹van Dijk IC, Hof AJ. [Treatment of feline hyperthyroidism with radioactive iodine-131]. *Tijdschrift voor diergeneeskunde* 2008;133:54-62.

¹²Milner RJ, Channell CD, Levy JK, et al. Survival times for cats with hyperthyroidism treated with iodine 131, methimazole, or both: 167 cases (1996-2003). *J Am Vet Med Assoc* 2006;228:559-563.

¹³Kirk CA, Hickman MA. Dietary protein requirement of cats with spontaneous renal disease. *J Vet Intern Med* 2000;14:351(abstract).

¹⁴Yamka R, Melendez L. Maintenance of lean body mass in senior cats fed a low-protein therapeutic renal food. *J Vet Intern Med* 2010;24:773(abstract).

¹⁵Yu S, et al. Dietary crude protein of 28.5% maintains long-term lean body mass in cats with impaired kidney function. *J Vet Intern Med* 2011 25:734(abstract).

Answering Pet Owner Questions About Hill's® Prescription Diet® y/d™ Feline Thyroid Health

Here are some ways to address common questions a patient's owner may have about feeding y/d.

Question

Can I give my cat other medications and treats once I start feeding y/d?

Answer

In order for this special food to work, it's critical that your cat eats only y/d. Other types of food, treats or supplements could impact y/d's effectiveness. Let me know what kinds of medications, treats or supplements you are currently giving your cat so I can confirm if they are appropriate to continue after you start feeding the new food.

Question

Can I feed y/d to the healthy cats in the house?

Answer

Yes. Foods containing amounts of iodine similar to y/d have been fed to healthy adult cats for one year with no observed side effects based on findings from physical examination, routine laboratory tests, measurement of thyroid hormone concentrations, and thyroid scans. A limited iodine food has also been used to safely manage hyperthyroidism in over 150 cats, with most of these cats eating the food for two to three years and some receiving it as their sole source of nutrition for five years.

Here are some ways to make sure all the cats in your household get the daily nutrition they need:

- Feed each cat individually so that only your hyperthyroid cat is eating y/d
- Feed all cats y/d and supplement **only** your healthy cats' meals with 1 tablespoon of either dry or canned adult maintenance cat food each day to provide additional iodine
- Do not feed y/d to growing kittens or pregnant or lactating queens

It is critical that your hyperthyroid cat eats only y/d and no other source of nutrition.

Question

How will I know if the food is working?

Answer

Before you leave today, we'll schedule recheck appointments for four and eight weeks from now so we can perform a quick blood test to see how your cat is doing on the new food. It's also very important that you call us if you feel your cat is showing any abnormal signs or if he or she is having difficulty transitioning to the new food.

Question

Is it okay to feed y/d to my cat if my pet also has kidney disease?

Answer

Because kidney disease is common in hyperthyroid cats, y/d was formulated with controlled amounts of protein, phosphorus and sodium, and supplemented with omega-3 fatty acids. This nutrient profile is similar to foods recommended for cats with kidney disease. Once kidney disease becomes advanced — with signs including decreased appetite, vomiting or weight loss — other nutritional management may be needed.

Follow-up for Increased Compliance

To increase compliance, check in with your client over the phone a couple of days after they begin the transition to y/d, and then again another seven to 14 days later.

