Cat Food Allergy: Symptoms and Treatment



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Some people are allergic to cats, but did you know that some cats are allergic to different kinds of food? If your vet diagnoses your cat with a food allergy, the simplest solution is to make sure she doesn't eat the offending food.

What are Food Allergies in cats?

Cats are known for their unyielding love for food. However, given that felines are also highly allergic to certain food proteins such as cat allergic to chicken. A flare-up of food allergies in cats is often caused by an adverse reaction against certain food proteins and cat allergic to chicken is triggered by the immune system, and can cause inflammations on the skin, as well as stomach disorders like diarrhoea and vomiting.

While food allergies in furries are common and easily treatable, and do not have any adverse effect on the cat’s lifestyle, here are some points for you to keep in mind the next time your feline friend has an allergic reaction to cat food, leaving you to wonder how to deal with cat allergies.

Signs and Symptoms of Food Allergies in Cats

Allergic reactions in cats triggered by food proteins are quite common in cats and can develop distinctive cat food allergy symptoms. So, if you are worried that your feline munchkin is suffering from a food allergy, why not find out from the following list of possible signs and cat food allergy symptoms in cats?

- **Inflammations -**

  An allergic reaction to certain food proteins in cats may cause inflammation over the skin, which can make your furry buddy irritable and itchy. Cats suffering from food allergies therefore can spend their time obsessively scratching, biting, and licking their fur. Overgrooming is also one of the most common cat food allergy symptoms for cats with food allergies.

- **Skin lesions -**

  Cats with food allergies can also develop skin lesions characterised by crustiness, hair loss, redness, ulcerations, and plaques.

- **Stomach disorders -**

  Food allergies in cats also cause uncomfortable stomach disorders that can result in diarrhoea, frequent vomiting, indigestion, and nausea.

Causes of Food Allergies in Cats

Food allergies in cats are generally a result of the immune system mistaking the food protein for some potentially harmful particle and reacting inappropriately, which can result in inflammations on the body, itchiness, as well as digestive disorders. Food allergies in cats can trigger at any point in their life, even from cat food for skin allergies products they have been exposed to before.

While cats can develop allergic reactions to a wide variety of foods, the protein molecules present in the food is usually identified as the main cause. And since cats are carnivores with a diet consisting mostly of animal proteins, consuming beef, fish and issue with cat allergic to chicken can give rise to unsuspected cat food for skin allergies symptoms.

In addition, cats can show signs of food allergy from having consumed dairy, egg, wheat, and corn, although such an occurrence in much rare.

What are the clinical signs of food allergies in cats?

While common cat food allergies can be quite bothersome for your kitty, as a cat parent you should rest easy, for food allergies are common with cats, and are highly treatable with over-the-counter medication.

Food allergies can also develop specific clinical signs, making it easier for veterinarians to diagnose them. Cats suffering from the risks of common cat food allergies may experience bouts of year-round inflammations and itching across their body. In addition to allergies developing from eating certain cat food for skin allergies, cats are also prone to atopy,

caused by inhaling environmental allergens. Cats over the age of three months can experience allergic reactions to certain foods at any point in their lifetimes and can equally affect both male and female cats.

How do veterinarians diagnose food allergies in cats?

Since furries display distinctive cat food allergy symptoms, there are several tests veterinarians can rely on to diagnose food allergies in cats. Of these, the elimination diet trial is one of the most popular and effective tests to detect whether your little furry feline is having an allergic reaction to food. Since food allergies in cats occur only from food items your kitty has previously been exposed to, the elimination diet trial involves using proteins in hypoallergenic cat food that your kitty has not previously tasted to see if they show any allergic reaction. This clinical trial for cat food allergy is usually a time-consuming process, and can take as long as 8 weeks. During this period, a veterinarian may insist on keeping the cat on the following:

- **Veterinary Novel Protein Diet** - This involves feeding your feline munchkin the protein groups that they have not been exposed to before to see if they show any allergic reaction.
- **Veterinary Hydrolysed Protein Diet** - This veterinarian-recommended diet with hypoallergenic wet cat food makes sure your adorable furball eats a hydrolysed diet, containing protein molecules that have been broken down into units too small to be detected by the cat’s immune system and avoid allergic reactions.
- **Home-prepared Novel Protein Diet** - Where the cat under diagnosis is put in a home-cooked diet plan with hypoallergenic cat food that does not contain any ingredients that they have been exposed to before.

Effective treatments for food allergies in cats

Mentioned below are some of the effective treatments that can benefit your furry feline munchkin.

- Over-the-counter medications and steroids can help treat cat food allergy.
- For severe cases of cat food allergy, a veterinarian may insist on immunotherapy to improve tolerance to food proteins.
- Hydrolysed protein diets with anti allergy cat food can also help in minimising the allergic reaction.

Although food allergies can be temporarily treated with hypoallergenic wet cat food, steroids and over-the-counter medications, they cannot be permanently treated, and cat food for skin allergies can be triggered from time to time across a cat’s lifetime. To avoid an allergic reaction to food in cats, it is best to have them completely avoid the food products they are allergic to, as well as other ingredients that might cause their cat food allergy to flare up.

Recovery and ongoing management of cat food allergies

Although food allergies do not generally pose life-threatening risks to cats, they are still annoying, and can flare up from time to time depending on the food your cat eats. While complete avoidance of food items that can possibly trigger an allergic reaction can help

avoid flare-ups to a good measure, cats recovering from food allergies must also be given some extra affection other than hypoallergenic wet cat food and healthcare for a speedy recovery.

Since the elimination trial involves offering food items that are unlikely to trigger a food allergy in cats, opting for the hypoallergenic cat food used in the food trial or hydrolysed diet containing anti allergy cat food can go the extra mile in ensuring your cat is free from the risks of food allergy in the long run. You can also consider a cat food chart recommendation from your veterinarian that avoids allergenic foods while making sure your cat receives all feline nutrients from the hypoallergenic diet for cats required for keeping up an energetic lifestyle.

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1. **What is the healthiest food for a cat?**

   Since cats are carnivores, they require a substantial amount of animal protein and fats to sustain life. When it comes to meat, chicken, turkey, lamb, beef and mutton are some of the most nutritious cat food that contain animal protein.

2. **What is a cat’s main diet?**

   As a carnivore the primary diet of cats include animal proteins and fat. Additionally, cats should also eat cat food that are fortified with balanced amounts of vitamins and minerals like copper and zinc present in balanced diet cat food.

3. **How much food a cat eats per day?**

   The daily cat nutritional needs are generally dependent on their age and weight. While a kitten weighing 2kgs to 3kgs requires about 210 grams of food every day, adult cats weighing over 6kgs may need over 360 grams of food.

4. **Can I feed my cat all day?**

   No, it is unwise to feed a cat all day. Adult cats do not require a caloric intake of more than 200 calories per day. Feeding an adult cat all day can lead to feline obesity and other health concerns.

5. **How many times should a cat eat?**

   According to cat nutritional needs, most cats do not require more than two meals per day. As kittens, felines are likely to require more meals per day to support their rapid growth and development, but adult cats require about 200 calories per day.

6. **What is a suitable diet for a cat?**

   Cats are carnivores so, the suitable balanced cat diet plan for a cat must include an adequate amount of animal protein such as chicken, beef or mutton, fat, and fatty acids, vitamins, and minerals such as zinc and copper.

7. **What should I feed my cat with food allergies?**

   Cat food allergy is usually caused by food items that your kitty has been exposed to before. So, if your cat has cat food allergies, you can try feeding them home-cooked meals with hypoallergenic cat food they have not had before.

8. **How do you get rid of cat food allergies?**

   Although allergic reactions to food are common in cats, they are highly treatable and usually subside within days. Certain hypoallergenic cat food, over-the-counter medications, and steroids are extremely effective in getting rid of cat food allergies within a short while.

9. **What is the most common food allergy in cats?**

   Cats can show signs of food allergy triggered by certain proteins present in fish, cat allergic to chicken or beef and dairy. Wheat, corn, and eggs that are absent in the hypoallergenic diet for cats can also lead to an allergic reaction.

10. **Why do cats love catnip?**

    Cats are known for their affection for catnip. Recent studies in this regard have shown that nepetalactone, an integral component present in catnip is responsible for this affection. Catnip is a plant that belongs to the same family as mints, and nepetalactone, often enters a cat’s nose, stimulating its sensory neurons. Nepetalactone is known to mimic a cat pheromone, which sends trigger signals to the brain mimicking a sexual response. This is why cats love catnip.

11. **At what age can you give catnip to a cat?**

    There is no specific age to introduce a cat to catnip. Though catnip does not have any detrimental effect on kittens, it takes the cat to be at least 6 months or 1 year of age to receive the desired reaction from catnip. However, some cats are exceptions to this, as their sensitivity to catnip can take time and develop over the years.

12. **Can cats overdose on catnip?**

    Though there have been no such instances that suggest the possibility of a cat overdosing on catnip. However, once already under the influence of catnip, it usually takes a cat a duration of two hours or more before it can once again experience the influence. Overindulgence, however, can be a problem, as your furry munchkin can fall sick if it has eaten too much catnip.

13. **Is catnip safe?**

    Have you ever thought what is catnip, or whether it is safe for cats? Catnip is widely

popular among cats. There has been no evidence that supports the claim that catnip is harmful or detrimental to the cat’s health. However, if you are granting your little furball access to catnip, make sure they do not ingest too much fresh or dried catnip, as it can upset their bowel system. This, however, does not always pose a severe threat as most cats are able to self-regulate.

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