

Bird Homemade Diets

Information for the Pet Bird Owner

Malnutrition is the number one cause of problems we see in the pet bird here at the Hospital. Most owners believe that an all seed diet for their pet is adequate nutrition. This is not true.

In the wild, birds eat a variety of food from small insects to a variety of fruits and vegetables leading to a complete, balanced diet. All seed mixtures do not mimic this balanced diet. The high fat content, low protein content (in some seeds) and mineral imbalances lead to a variety of illness and stress. All seed diets reduce both the life span and quality of life for your pet.

For ease of use, we recommend pelleted bird food.

Some owners wish to feed their birds people food. This can be done but you must be extremely careful in terms of types and amounts of food your pet eats.

To begin, remember the four basic food groups.

Dairy products. This is a source of calcium. To supply this essential mineral, always have a cuttlebone, mineral treat block or oyster shell available to your pet. Aim for 20%.

Fiber. On a daily basis, whole grain bread cubes (or something similar) or monkey chow should be offered.

Seeds may be offered in a small amount only. Only allow the bird 15 - 30 minutes total per day eating seeds. We recommend the small seeds (poppy, millet, safflower, etc.). Only birds larger than a cockatiel should have access to sunflower seeds. Aim for 20%.

Fruits and Vegetables. On a daily basis, dark green or yellow vegetables should be offered. Fruit can be offered every other day. Avocado is toxic to some birds so do not feed it. Aim for 40%.

Protein. On a daily basis, your pet should have a protein in the form of cheese, hard-cooked eggs, meat or certain protein high vegetables. Aim for 20%.

If this at-home meal plan interests you, please telephone the veterinarians here at the Hospital and we will be happy to assist you in a diet selection for your pet.

As with any diet for birds, we recommend a vitamin supplement. Vitamins in the water work best.



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