

Pelleted Foods for Birds

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.

We strongly recommend pelleted feeds for your bird. Complete, balanced pelleted feeds are available to meet the unique nutrition of your pet bird. The pellets come in a variety of sizes to accommodate birds from finches to macaws. The pelleted diet should comprise 80-90 percent of your bird's diet with the other 10-20 percent supplied by fresh vegetables, croutons, hard cheese and so forth.

The Hospital carries Lafeber's and Zupreem. Other brands include Harrison's and Roudybush.

Many manufacturers now have website ordering. This can be an inexpensive way to order food as opposed to a pet store. Here are some of the more premium foods websites:

Harrison's - <http://www.harrisonsbirdfoods.com>

Lafeber's - <http://www.lafeber.com>

Zupreem - <http://www.zupreem.com>

Roudybush - <http://www.roudybush.com>

Harrison's Pet Food is a major brand that is organic and pesticide free.

Vitamins

In addition to the diet, we recommend vitamin supplementation. Vitamins in the water work well.

Transition Foods

To change from seeds to a more appropriate diet can be hard. In our experience, two weeks of going 'cold turkey' over to new food works but you need to constantly monitor your bird.

For underweight birds from previous diet problems should not be put onto the new diet cold turkey.

For these birds or for owners who cannot monitor their birds closely, transition foods can be helpful. Basically these are complete, balanced bird foods that contain a sweet base that is very palatable to birds.

Examples include Lafeber's Nutriacakes and Nutriberries.

Other

1. These pelleted diets are for healthy adult birds. If your bird is a neonate or sick, other diets are available to help.
2. Feed your bird twice daily. In the wild food is not always available. This helps to minimize boredom. Use hide boxes or other techniques to make your bird forage for their food.

Please feel free to telephone the Hospital to discuss your particular dietary requirements with a veterinarian.



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