

**For after-hours
emergencies
(before 9:30 a.m.
and after 6:30 p.m.,
seven days a
week), call:
*your number here***



STAGE 4 KITTENS

WEANING KITTEN, BOTTLE 3 TIMES/DAY

FEEDING

- These kittens are currently being fed wet food **every four to five hours during the day, for a total of five times a day.**
 - For example, you can feed at 7 a.m., 11 a.m., 3 p.m., 7 p.m. and 11 p.m. You can adjust these times a bit to work with your schedule.
- Offer kittens canned food prior to the bottle at each feeding to try to get them to eat the wet food first.
- Start by offering a quarter can of the canned food, per kitten, at each feeding – if they eat it all and still seem hungry, it's okay to offer a little more at each feeding.
- To help the kittens eat, you may need to shape the food into a little pile or “mountain”.
- They may be more successful eating the wet food if there is a little bit of warm water or warm formula mixed in, to make it a gruel consistency.
- If they get wet food on their faces or front feet during feedings, they will need to be cleaned up after feeding times to prevent hair loss.
- After you have offered them wet food, please follow up by offering them the bottle after morning (**7 a.m.**), mid-day (**11 a.m.**) and evening (**7 p.m.**) meals and allow them to drink formula until they are no longer hungry – **but offer wet food first. This will help with the process of weaning them off the bottle.**
 - Different kittens from the litter may wean off the bottle at different times as well.
- Mix formula with a ratio of one scoop formula to two scoops warm/hot water, and shake well.
 - Mixed formula can only be refrigerated for up to 24 hours. After 24 hours, discard and make a fresh batch.
- To reheat the bottle, simply place in a cup of hot water until warmed.
- As they continue to eat solid food better, and are gaining weight well, their feeding schedule can be changed to a bottle three times a day, with wet food still being given four to five times a day, and dry food left out at all times. See the **Stage 5 Care Sheet** for more details.
 - From there, over time, you can try cutting back on one more bottle, as long as they are eating solid food better and still gaining weight.
- The goal is to have the kittens off the bottle and getting wet food only twice daily by the time they return for surgery, but we will need to do that gradually.

Dry Food

- Leave some dry kibble out for them at all times as they are nibbling on it throughout the day.
- Start by offering a quarter cup dry food. If all that is eaten, then add a quarter cup more.

WEIGHT

- Weigh kittens daily in grams, using gram scale provided. Please weigh kittens around the same time every day, and prior to eating, for consistency.
 - Notify foster staff of weight loss, especially of large weight drops (10 percent of body weight or more) in one day.
- Record daily weight on your foster care **Log Sheet.**

SUCKING

- Orphan kittens sometimes develop a habit of nursing on each other in the absence of their mother. If you notice kittens sucking on each other, separate them immediately. Sucking can cause serious injury, especially to male kittens.
- After kittens are separated, examine each kitten's genital region for swelling.
- Stimulate each kitten to ensure they are able to urinate. If they do not urinate after the next feeding, alert your foster team.
- Clean and dry any soiled kittens to prevent skin irritation from urine and feces.
- If you have started to reduce the number of bottles the kittens get daily, you may need to reintroduce the bottle until this behavior lessens.

MEDICAL MONITORING

- Monitoring for signs of illness is very important in young kittens. Here are some signs to look out for:
 - Coughing, sneezing, eye/nasal discharge, lethargy, vomiting, loss of appetite, weight loss or diarrhea.
- Notify foster staff of any medical concerns the same day you notice the issue.
- For urgent matters, contact the emergency number listed at the top of this care form.

ROUTINE TREATMENTS

- Kittens need routine treatments to stay healthy:
 - Dewormers are due every two weeks.
 - At five weeks old the kittens will be due for first vaccine, feline leukemia testing and microchip.
 - Booster vaccines will be scheduled every two weeks after the initial vaccines.

SPAY/NEUTER TIME

- The kittens will be able to return for surgery/adoption once they are around eight weeks old and weigh at least 850 grams and are totally off the bottle.
- Contact your foster team to schedule a surgery appointment.

