



## Kitten Tutor™: Diarrhea, a Sign of Possible Illness

First of all, diarrhea is not a disease, but a sign of possible illness. Many diseases can cause diarrhea, and several other factors can as well. You should always consult your veterinarian if your kitten is having diarrhea, and for very tiny kittens, immediate action is needed. Bottle baby kittens can quickly dehydrate and even older kittens with bad diarrhea can dehydrate and decline rapidly, so your prompt actions can save their lives.

Often, diarrhea is a result of feeding food that is too rich, feeding too much, or feeding too often. As bottle-baby kittens grow, they can go for longer periods of time between feedings. As long as kittens are stable, increase the time between feedings by about 30 minutes, and see if the stool becomes a bit firmer within two or three feedings. Also, the formula mixture may be too rich; try adding a bit more water.

Older kittens that are eating on their own may tend to eat too much - if we let them. We love to see kittens eagerly eating and happily digging into their food. However, as their caregivers, we sometimes need to set tough-love limits on the amount of food they get. Feed appropriately for age, size and health, and always weigh kittens at least once daily. The scale will verify that they're getting enough food, and the litter box will help show if they are getting too much!

Of course, there are other causes for diarrhea including parasites, viruses, and bacterial infections. That is why it is essential for veterinary consult regarding diarrhea causes and treatment options.

There is a lot more to know about diarrhea than we can cover here. Our workshops provide more information about possible causes, supportive therapies, medication options, how to prevent it, and how to clean up after it! Watch for upcoming workshops and webinars on this topic and others, and in the meantime, check out our [Fast Facts Info Sheet](#) with information about kitten stool - what you want to see, and what you don't!

Thanks for all you do to help kittens and for your support of our life-saving programs! Together, we're saving more kittens than ever!

---

NKC offers Kitten Tutor™ handouts free to anyone interested in saving kittens. We are a 501(c)(3) and teach shelters, rescues, foster families and the veterinary community how to save more kittens. To learn more, visit: [www.kittencoalition.org](http://www.kittencoalition.org). © 2020 National Kitten Coalition