

Quality Diet Equals Quality Life

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THE DOCTORS' INFORMATION SERIES



Birds are just like people when it comes to needing complete nutrition. Vitamins and minerals, along with trace elements, are required for growth and maintenance of homeostasis (regulation of body functions). A balanced diet will provide all the nutrition your bird needs.

Unfortunately, some birds are fussy about what they eat and you may think it will be difficult to feed your avian friend so he gets optimum nutrition. But getting your bird to eat healthy foods is not as difficult as you may think.

With a bit of creativity and a little style, the tasty and convenient foods and treats on the market can help you out.

Pellets make a good foundation

A quality commercial pellet food, such as [ZuPreem Avian Maintenance Natural](#) is an excellent foundation diet. Pellets are fortified and balanced for optimal nutritional intake and better health. And because the pellets are completely consumable, a pellet diet means less mess and waste. Pellets are also easier for your bird to digest and most birds have firmer droppings when they eat pellets, making cleanup easier for you. From this nutritional base, you should add a supplement with other foods, such as [fruits and vegetables](#), to add more nutrients, interest and fun to your bird's meals.

Beyond a basic pellet diet, birds need plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. Birds have a tendency towards Vitamin A deficiency, so make sure your bird gets plenty of orange/yellow vegetables such as carrots, cantaloupe, and cooked squash, and dark green leafy vegetables such as endive, romaine lettuce, and collard greens.

How to introduce a change in diet

Although some birds are stubborn about trying anything new, we have some tried and true tips that you will find useful when changing your bird's diet.

- Start young. The younger a bird is when he starts on a healthier diet, the more likely he will be to try new foods as you introduce them.

- Some birds are social eaters. Eat some of his new food while he's watching you. You'll pique his curiosity, and he'll be tempted to try some, also.
- Offer new foods first thing in the morning, since this is when many birds naturally forage for food. After you offer the new foods, feed them their usual food 2 hours later.
- If a food is totally new to a bird, he may not even recognize it as food. Offer new food in a familiar dish with other foods your bird already likes, and he may try the new food. Even if your bird only gets a taste of the new food accidentally, he still might decide he likes it.
- Add eye appeal. Try a mix of brightly colored vegetables (cooked or raw) in bite sized pieces.
- Try different forms of new foods – some birds prefer raw vegetables to cooked, while others are the opposite. Some like their cooked vegetables warm, while others prefer them cool. Your bird may prefer his fruits or vegetables in a puree or juice.
- Place treats such as [sunflower seeds](#) in a dish of new food. Your bird will likely get a taste of the new food while extracting the treat (the key here is to use just enough treats to make your bird dig through the new food to get to them).
- A food that is ignored in a food dish might be eaten if offered in a [clip](#) on the side of the cage or in a play area. Use a skewer, such as the [Garden Kabob](#) to present new healthy fruits or vegetables to your bird. Or weave greens through the bars of the cage.

If your picky bird is successfully enticed into trying a diverse and healthy diet, he will be more willing to try even more varieties of healthy foods. And a healthier diet will give your bird an overall healthier life.

WE RECOMMEND



[Sunflower Seeds](#)



[Treat Clips](#)



[Garden Kabobs](#)

behavior
EFFECT Should I feed my bird at
the same time each day?

Yes. Predictability – including meals – is closely related to a bird’s natural need to feel safe, and can mean less stress or stress-related behaviors.