

International Center for Veterinary Services □□□□□□□□□□

Avian Information

Diet for Birds:

- Controversial and changing topic
- Many different species and our information extrapolated to some extent from poultry medicine
- Majority of diet should be a reputable formulated pellet
- Storage and safety of pellet crucial
- No bulk, open bag market pellets

- Birds will not self select a balanced diet on their own
- Strong preference for seed and nuts
- Nutritionally high fat and not ideal

- Malnutrition most common veterinary diagnosis
- All seed and majority seed diets lack 32 essential vitamins, mineral, and amino acids
- Harrison's bird food suggests supplemental food (diet besides pellets) be no more than 10% of diet
- Variety of colored vegetables

- Others suggest around 60-80 % pellets, 20-40 % vegetables, and seed and fruit as treat only
- Some suggest seed be 10% of diet for pscittacines and passerines
- Color mutation cockatiels concern for renal tubular damage with all pellet diet

- Some feel passerines have a greater need for seed
- But many passerine patients are obese and exhibit evidence of nutritional imbalance
- Reducing seed in diet is a common recommendation

- Nutritional recommendations based on each patient's diet and husbandry history and clinical picture
- Birds fed a majority pellet diet don't need vitamin or mineral supplementation
- Could be harmful to provide additional supplementation

- Patient activity level determines metabolic demands and required caloric intake
- In obese patients already on a complete pelleted diet, limiting the amount of pellets and increasing activity is essential for weight loss
- Some examples of vegetables-sweet potatoes, cilantro, kale, yellow squash, pumpkin, carrot, broccoli, etc.
- Aerosol cleaners, etc.
- "Super-heated" Teflon coated cookware
- Mite protectors
- Caffeine, chocolate, grapes, onions, garlic, avocados
- House plants
- Gravel or grit in pscittacines
- Controversial in passerines-most avian vets don't recommend

- Flight in unprotected areas, i.e. most households
- Big bird and little bird contact, i.e. mixing species

Avoid:

- Aerosol cleaners, etc.
 - “Super-heated” Teflon coated cookware
 - Mite protectors
 - Caffeine, chocolate, grapes, onions, garlic, avocados
 - House plants
 - Gravel or grit in psittacines
 - Controversial in passerines-most avian vets don't recommend
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- Flight in unprotected areas, i.e. most households
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