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NUTRITION

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR STIMULATING APPETITE

THINK WARMTH!



What about temperature?

Play with the temperature of the food. Warm it up.



Add!

Top dress the food with a small amount of something "tasty". Chicken/beef broth, tuna juice (cats), parmesan cheese, FortiFlora® and peanut butter free of xylitol are all great additions when in small amounts.



Rethink!

Any environmental stressors? Move your patient somewhere quiet. Perhaps try making mealtime fun by using their food as "treats" if they are a social eater. Evaluate pain score and pain control. Are current medications influencing appetite?



Method of feeding and management!

Bowl too big or too small? Try handfeeding. If they are eating but aren't eating much, try an energy-dense food. Monitor food consumption relative to Resting Energy Requirements (RER) daily.



Texture!

Consider using different food textures such as fresh, dry, loaf or stew. Add varying amounts of water to change consistency.



How long?

Remove unconsumed food after 25 minutes with patient. If patient is consuming less than 1/2 of their RER for > 3 days, consider further interventions such as an appetite stimulant or enteral feeding. Assess for risk of refeeding syndrome, monitor electrolytes and symptoms. Introduce food gradually over 3-4 days. AT RISK: Anorexia > 3 days, hyporexia > 5 days. **Still struggling? Contact a veterinary nutritionist.**