How long should struvite-prevention diets be fed to cats?

Nutritional dissolution and prevention of struvite (figure 1) is an innovative compassionate therapy that is rapidly replacing expensive painful surgical removal of struvite stones. Requiring only a few weeks to dissolve struvite stones, how long should therapeutic foods be fed to prevent their recurrence? It will likely vary with each cat, but data from the Minnesota Urolith Center indicates that struvite stones primarily affect young to early-middle age cats (figure 2). In 2021 we analyzed stones from almost 20,000 cats. Approximately half were composed of struvite, and of that half, 90% were from cats 10-years-old or younger. This indicates that for many struvite stone formers, prevention is less needed as cats age. After switching to a different diet, monitor the cat’s urine a month later. If struvite crystalluria persists, the struvite-prevention diet may need to be fed longer.

See also our Feline Struvite Dissolution and Feline Struvite Risk Management recommendations.

Figure 2
Prevalence of Struvite in Cats by Age (year)

Minnesota Urolith Center – Image of the Month, June 2022