

OPOSSUMS

Sample Make-in-Advance Diet Recipes

Blend Well and Freeze in Ice Cube Trays, Paper Cups, Zip Lock Baggies, or Larger Containers

Although, daily preparation of diets may work best with most caregivers, with variety suggested on the Weaning Schedule, the following formulations are offered for the benefit of those large busy wildlife centers who may be fortunate enough to have volunteers who prepare diets in large batches at home and deliver weekly. The blended nature of these formulations increases the probability that every mouthful will contain a balanced blend, and will prevent any one animal from gulping his favorite food item before the others get to the bowl.

Infant Formula *MultiMilk, Milk Matrix 33/40, and Milk Matrix 30/55 may be used in place of Esbilac*

Esbilac	Distilled Water	Egg Yolk Cooked	Calcium Liquid or Tablet	Brewer's Yeast	Apple Juice	Nutrical *
1/3 C.	1 C.	1/2 lg. (8ml)	1 tsp. Calciquick (or 100 mg)	3.8 gr or 250 mg	1 Tbsp.	(See Note above) 2-inch line (6 gm)
1 C.	3 C.	1-1/2 lg (24 ml)	1 Tbsp. Calciquick (or 300 mg)	11.3 gr or 750 mg	3 Tbsp.	6-inch line (18 gm)

Post-Weaning Diet (For orphans weighing up to 100 Grams)

Infant Formula - 9 parts *(See above for recipe)	Peter's Food - 1 part *(See below for recipe)	Fruit - 1 part (Variety)	Protein - None
9 Ice Cubes of frozen formula	1 Ice Cube of Peters Food	2 Tbsp.	None!
1 C. plus 2 Tbsp.	2 Tbsp.	2 Tbsp.	None!

Post-Weaning Diet (For orphans weighing 100 to 200 Grams)

Infant Formula - 50% *(See above for recipe)	Peter's Food - 35% *(See below for recipe)	Fruit - 15% (Variety)	Protein - <1% Pre-stirred Fruit Yogurt (*See note)
1 C.	3/4 C.	1/3 C.	1 tsp.
2 C.	1-1/2 C.	2/3 C.	2 Tbsp.
3 C.	2-1/4 C.	1 C.	1 Tbsp.
5 C.	3-1/2 C.	1-1/2 C.	5 Tbsp.

NOTE: Plus - Introduce scrambled egg to each animal - up to 10 grams per 200-gram animal (1 egg approx. 50 grams) once or twice a week.

Post-Weaning Diet (For Orphans 200 Grams to 1 lb.)

Infant Formula - 10% *(See above for recipe)	Peter's Food - 78% *(See below for recipe)	Fruit - 20% (Variety)	Mixed Protein - 2% See Recipe Below
1/4 C.	1-3/4 C.	1/2 C.	2-1/2 Tbsp.
1 C.	7 C.	2 C.	3 Tbsp.
3 C.	21 C.	6 C.	10 Tbsp. (or 1/2 C. plus 2 Tbsp.)

Juvenile Diet (Opossums weighing 1 lb. to Release) (Gradually convert to Adult Diet - See Tab 3)

Infant Formula - Discontinue 0%	Peter's Food - 70% *(See below for recipe)	Fruit - 20% (Variety)	Mixed Protein - 10% See Recipe Below
None	2-1/3 C.	2/3 C.	1/3 C.
None	7 C.	2 C.	1 C.

Mixed Protein Recipe (To be used as protein choice in animals over 200 grams only)

NOTE: Variety! - Avoid offering any single high Vitamin A protein, such as Salmon & Chicken Livers, day after day.

Canned Salmon	Hard Boiled Eggs	Chicken Livers Cooked	Yogurt Pre-stirred Fruit or Plain
1/4 C.	2 Large	1/4 C.	1 C.
1/2 C.	4 Large	1/2 C.	2 C.
1 Can	8 Large	1 C.	2 lbs. (4 C.)

Peter's Food (1 Part Cat Chow : 1 Part Vegetables : 1/4 Part Yogurt)

Adult Cat Chow- see note	Blended Vegetables	Yogurt
1/2 C.	1/2 C.	2 Tbsp.
1 Baby Food Jar	1 Baby Food Jar	1/4 Baby Food Jar
1 C.	1 C.	1/4 C.
2 C.	2 C.	1/2 C.
4 C.	4 C.	1 C.

NOTE: Choose quality cat chow with approximately Protein 32%, Fat 12%, Calcium 1.1%, Phos 0.8%, Vitamin A 10,000 IU/kg. Some nutritionists view soy as a harmful recent addition to chow products, and you may want to avoid it. Chows vary widely and change frequently without warning. Check your labels!

SAMPLE ADULT OPOSSUM DIET (6 to 9 POUNDS)

Food Sources	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Protein (all cooked) plus vegetables and fruit	Scrambled Egg (max 1)	Sardine or Salmon 1 level measuring Tbsp.	1/2 chicken wing or neck w/bones (no skin or fat) plus 1-2 Tbsps.* Yogurt	Lowfat mozzarella cheese (est. 1/2 to 1 ounce)	Similar to Monday	Similar to Tuesday	1 Tbsp. chicken liver plus 1 Tbsp.* yogurt
Vegetable	Amount for size of opossum (estimated 1/4 to 1/2 cup): Variety, all forms - include some yellow, red and green vegetables such as carrots, broccoli and spinach, lettuces, cauliflower, cabbage, bell peppers, squashes, ETC.						
Adult Cat Chow- see note	Start out with equal parts cat chow and vegetables. With captive opossums, starting at 9 months of age, the ratio drops to 80% vegetables/20% cat chow. At one year of age, ratio drops even further to 90% veggies/10% chow.						
Fruit	Amount for size of opossum (estimated 1/4 cup): Variety; in season; all forms (including dried)						
WEEKLY				EVERY 1-2 WEEKS			
Live Food - Estimated 1-2 Tbsps.* Brewer's Yeast - 2 to 4 tablets (7.5 gr. size) Pasta, Oatmeal, etc. - Maximum - 1/2 cup More! Including grains, rice, grasses, etc.				Vitamin E - From gel cap (5 units per pound weight into mouth or mix with yogurt.) Monkey Chow - 1 to 2 biscuits Oat-bran Cookie - 1 small; Avocado - Maximum - 1/4; Nuts - Maximum 2-3 Tbsps.* Other "goodies" - Small amounts - More!			
* Measuring Tablespoons							
THINK: VARIETY!							
Regarding above:							
1. Daily, add appropriate amount of cat chow (By 9 to 12 months, max 10-20%).							
2. In place of dry cat chow, may use particulate Peter's Food (see below) if opossum is reluctant to eat vegetables.							
3. Feed a small amount of what you are eating (if you eat healthily!), daily.							
4. After 9-12 months of age, give only "non-fat" forms of all foods.							
5. Avoid "pure" proteins -- watch amount! Add yogurt (if necessary) to improve calcium content. NO "Road Kill"!							
6. AVOID vitamin supplements, except as listed. Caution with high Vitamin A foods - (leafy green, orange, yellow veggies; mackerel; salmon; liver)							
7. After 5 months of age, may use mackerel and other proteins occasionally. Caution with Amounts!							

NOTE: Choose quality cat chow with approximately Protein 32%, Fat 12%, Calcium 1.1%, Phos 0.8%, Vitamin A 10,000 IU/kg. Some nutritionists view soy as a harmful recent addition to chow products, and you may want to avoid it. Chows vary widely and change frequently without warning. Check your labels!

FOR ANIMALS UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO EAT ABOVE DIET "PETER'S FOOD" *

(Weekly and Bi-Weekly Items Above are Added to this Diet)

	Up to 1 Year of Age	1 Year and Older
Adult Cat Chow- See note	50 Grams	10-20 grams
Vegetables	50 grams	50-60
Yogurt	12.5 grams	10-20

* The vegetables can be cooked and placed in blender with yogurt and then added to dry chow. If the animal cannot chew, soak the chow and place everything in blender, add water to bring to convenient consistency for syringe feeding. Must feed more often if it is necessary to water down Peter's Food.

Copyright, 1996-2005 Do not duplicate without written permission.

National Opossum Society www.opossum.org

P.O. Box 2119, Catonsville, MD 21228

April 22, 2005