

FEEDING & TRANSITIONING YOUR CAT OR DOG

HOW DO I TRANSITION?

We always recommend a slow transition to reduce the chances of stomach upset when switching to a new brand, product, or even recipe (depending on your dog or cat's level of sensitivity to food changes). Here are some [tips for transitioning dogs to new food](#) and [tips for transitioning cats to new food](#).

HOW DO I USE THE FROZEN FOOD?

Stella & Chewy's frozen dinner patties or morsels should be gently defrosted overnight in a covered container in the refrigerator. If you are using our frozen dinner morsels, these can be defrosted in a bowl on your counter for 10-20 minutes. Please note that our products should never be cooked, heated, or microwaved. If you need to defrost product quickly, you can place the food in a Ziplock bag or glass bowl and submerge the product in warm (never hot) water for a few minutes. Once served, the food can sit out for up to 2 hours – anything left after that should be discarded.

HOW DO I USE THE FREEZE-DRIED FOOD?

Stella & Chewy's freeze-dried raw patties and Meal Mixers can be fed dry or rehydrated prior to feeding. If you choose to use the products dry, please be sure your pet is drinking plenty of water at mealtime. If your pet is not a big drinker, or you are afraid that they may not get enough water, then we would suggest rehydrating the food with cool or warm (never hot) water or broth prior to feeding. If fed dry, the food can sit out for up to 12 hours prior to discarding. If fed rehydrated, the food can sit out for up to 2 hours.

CAN I PUT REHYDRATED FREEZE-DRIED RAW IN THE FRIDGE?

Yes, but for no longer than 2 days. Once rehydrated, we would not recommend leaving the food out for an hour or 2 before placing it in the refrigerator.

CAN I WARM UP THE FOOD?

Stella & Chewy's raw or raw-inclusive products should never be warmed, cooked or heated in any way. To maintain the nutritional value, it is important to keep the food raw and in its natural state, and heating can eliminate many of the benefits before the food is served. Plus, we add raw, ground bone to our raw diets. While raw bone is incredibly safe and an essential part of a raw diet, it becomes brittle and can splinter when cooked; this poses an unnecessary danger to your animals.

CAN I FREEZE STELLA'S STEW?

You can freeze our Stella's Stew wet food, just make sure you do not freeze a new, unopened container as it could expand and explode. If you have leftovers from an already opened can, it would be fine to freeze.

DO I NEED TO CHANGE FLAVORS?

When feeding a raw diet, we suggest rotating proteins every 2-6 weeks. This means you would feed one flavor consistently for 2-6 weeks, then switch to another flavor for 2-6 weeks, etc. This is a great way to give your dog variety and to help keep protein-based allergies at bay. However, in many cases there is no issue in feeding your dog the same recipe long-term!

WHY ARE MY DOG'S STOOLS HARD AND SMALL?

Many raw-fed dogs have smaller, firmer and less frequent stools as their bodies are utilizing so much of the food. Our recipes are enhanced with probiotics to support proper gut flora and contain natural sources of fiber like pumpkin seed and raw ground bone for healthy digestion. You can always add more water when rehydrating the food to ensure your dog is staying hydrated. Please do not hesitate to contact our team at help@stellaandchewys.com or chat to us using the live chat on our site with any questions or concerns!

DO YOU NEED TO TRANSITION WHEN USING MEAL MIXERS?

When fed as a topper, we do still recommend introducing Meal Mixers to your dog's diet slowly, working your way up to the feeding guidelines/full serving that's shared on the back of the packaging. Whenever adding a topper, it's also important to decrease whatever you are currently feeding in order to not overfeed your dog when adding Meal Mixers in with the meal. If you need further help with calculating how much you should be reducing, please reach out to us at help@stellaandchewys.com or chat to us using the live chat on our site. If you will be feeding Meal Mixers as a complete and balanced meal (all recipes can be fed as complete and balanced meals with the only exception being the Savory Salmon & Cod recipe), it will be necessary to transition slowly using the timeline shared above.

I JUST TRANSITIONED MY DOG TO YOUR KIBBLE AND HAVE BEEN FEEDING THE WHITEFISH RECIPE. I'D LIKE TO START FEEDING THE DUCK RECIPE. DO I NEED TO TRANSITION BETWEEN RECIPES?

If your dog is fully transitioned to a food type, it should not be necessary to transition them to a different recipe. That said, if your dog is a bit more sensitive with changes in their diet, you certainly can introduce it more slowly, but it typically isn't necessary.

SHOULD I SWITCH UP RECIPES? IF SO, HOW OFTEN?

If your dog doesn't have any food allergies or sensitivities, switching the proteins/recipes can be a really good idea; it can actually help prevent intolerances and allergies from developing. We suggest feeding 1 flavor for 2-6 weeks, then switching to a different flavor for 2-6 weeks, etc. No transition is needed between flavors for an average dog.