



## Orphaned Kitten Care for Foster Parents

---

Pre-weaned to newly weaned kittens are very susceptible to various ailments including hypothermia (low body temperature), hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), dehydration, and other diseases. This SOP was developed in order to address these issues and to do our best to prevent illness in this susceptible population. Orphaned kittens weighing between 0.9lbs and 2.0 lbs on intake will now be cared for according to the following SOP.

### Cage/Room set up:

- If you choose to take a kennel home, set up according to the cage set up guidelines in the back of this packet. Also, you can follow these general guidelines for setting up your small room for the kittens.
- Keep separate from resident pets.
- Make sure the kittens have a warm spot to sleep. A cat bed or towels made into a bed work well. For the smaller kittens a snuggle safe may be needed to keep their bedding area warm. Snuggle safes can be checked out from foster care.
- Warm a snuggle safe in the microwave for 4-5 minutes. Place the snuggle safe in the kennel **under a towel (single layer)**. Feel with your hand to make sure the area is not too warm. Roll up a towel and place in a u shape around the towel covering the snuggle safe to create a bed like area. Or place a small cat bed in the cage and place the snuggle safe on top of the middle of the bed with a towel covering the snuggle safe.
- If the kitten is a singleton, place a kitten sized stuffed animal in the bedding area for the kitten to cuddle with. You can also check out a purr monster from the foster care department.
- Use an appropriate sized litter box for the number of kittens in a cage, use the litter boxes with low sides so they can easily enter and climb out of the litter box. Foster care will supply you with a litter box or paper litter boxes if needed.
- Use paper litter for kittens under 1.2lbs
- Use the small ceramic bowls for their food/water (one with water, one with KMR gruel, one with canned food, and one with dry kitten food). Place bowls toward the back of the kennel/room so the kitten doesn't fall in the food/water when at the door.

### **Animal care/cleaning:**

- Change or scoop litter boxes when soiled.
- Food/water bowls should be changed out and cleaned twice daily with new fresh food/water added.
- Towels/bedding should be changed as soon as possible if soiled/wet.
- Check snuggle safes after every feeding and re-heat for 4-5 minutes in the nursery microwave if needed. Make sure to check the temperature with your hand before placing it in the kennel. Place the snuggle safe in the bedding area under a towel.

### **Feeding for Kittens Weighing 0.9-1.2lbs AND 5 weeks or younger:**

- Kittens in this weight range will be syringe fed 4-5 times daily (7:30am, 11am, 3pm, 6pm, and 10pm) with KMR regardless of if they are eating on their own unless directed otherwise by a veterinarian.
- Kittens will be weighed daily before the morning feeding and the weight will be recorded on the kittens feeding chart.
- If the kittens are not gaining weight or losing weight within that 24-hour period, the foster parent will need to supplement with syringe feeding KMR 4-5 times daily according to the feeding chart for the animal's weight. Also, subcutaneous fluids should be given according to the fluid chart based on the animal's weight.
- Refer to the attached feeding chart for amount to be syringe feed based on the animal's weight. If kittens are acting full, have round bellies, and eating well on their own they may not need the whole amount of KMR on the chart. A **minimum** of 12 mls must be fed at every feeding.
- Use a 12 cc syringe (non-luer lock) for feeding the kittens, make sure to use a new syringe for each kitten or litter
- For litters of kittens, you can use the round robin method for feeding to expedite the process (Go around in a circle feeding a few mls at a time until gone and estimate the amount feed to each kitten based on the total amount fed and the number of kittens).
- Note the amount fed on the **blue feeding chart** for each animal.
- The syringe feeding and subcutaneous fluids should be given until the kitten has gained weight for 3 consecutive days.
- ¼ packet fortiflora per kitten should be given once daily mixed in with the food for 7 days.

- If syringe feeding is needed warm the KMR to 90-100 degrees F before serving at each feeding. Bottle warmers work best for this. Microwaves can cause hot spots so use caution. A meat thermometer works well to test the temperature of the KMR prior to feeding.
- Use a 12 cc syringe (non-luer lock) for feeding, make sure to wash out the syringe in between feedings and use a new syringe each day. The same syringe can be used for kittens housed together but a different one between groups not housed together.
- Note the amount fed on the feeding chart for each animal and the time fed.
- After feeding clean off the kitten with a warm damp wash cloth if needed. Make sure the kitten is completely dry before putting the kitten back in the kennel.

#### **Feeding for Kittens weighing 1.2-2.0lbs AND 6 weeks or older:**

- Kittens will be weighed daily before the morning feeding and the weight will be recorded on the kittens feeding chart.
- Kittens in this weight range do not need to be syringe feed unless they lose weight or do not gain within 24hrs.
- If losing weight, syringe fed 4-5 times daily (7:30am, 11am, 3pm, 6pm, and 10pm) with canned kitten food mixed with water (2 parts canned food to 1 part warm water) regardless if they are eating on their own unless directed otherwise by a veterinarian.
- You can try to encourage the kittens to eat some canned food first before syringe feeding to see if they will eat some on their own. If they are not interested, you can place a small amount of canned food on the roof of the kitten's mouth then hold some up to their mouth with a spoon. If not interested in one type, you can try a variety of different foods. You can check with your foster care department for other options.
- For litters of kittens in the same litter, you can use the round robin method for feeding to expedite the process (Go around in a circle feeding a few mls at a time until gone and estimate the amount feed to each kitten based on the total amount fed and the number of kittens)
- Use a 12 cc syringe (non-luer lock) for feeding the kittens, make sure to use a new syringe for each kitten or litter.
- Stop syringe feeding when kittens are acting full and have round bellies. A **minimum** of 12 mls must be fed at every feeding.
- Note the amount fed on the **blue feeding chart** for each animal.

- After feeding clean off the kitten with a warm damp wash cloth. Make sure the kitten is completely dry before putting the kitten back in the kennel to prevent hypothermia.
- Kittens need to be supplement fed until there has been 72 hours of weight gain and they are over 1.2lbs or as directed by a vet.

#### **Subcutaneous fluids:**

- Procedure – Alcohol injection port, use an 18g needle on a leur lock syringe to draw up necessary amount based on weight (see chart), one-handed re-capping to remove needle and attach butterfly catheter, tent kitten skin between shoulders, place needle under the skin (don't poke down too deep), inject the fluids slowly, pinch the skin and remove the needle. Have Foster Coordinator show you first.

#### **Medical concerns:**

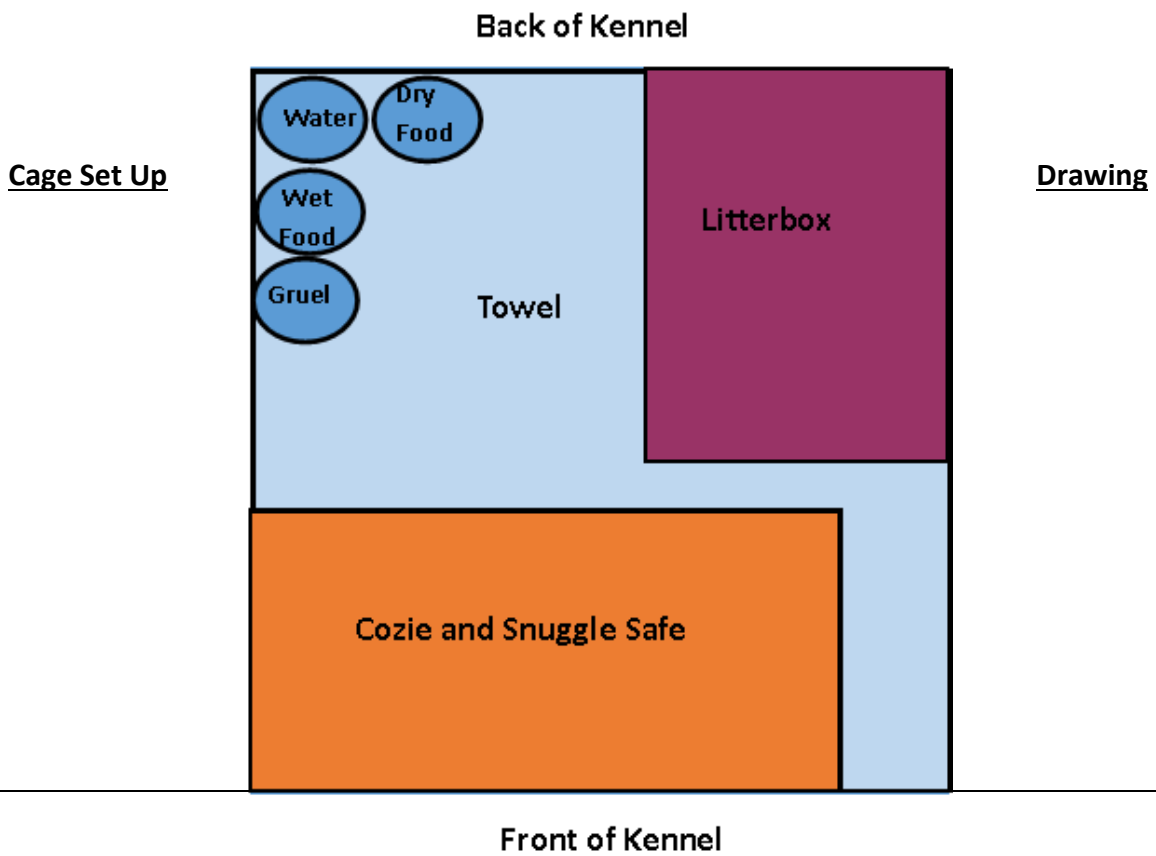
- If you notice sneezing in your foster kittens, check their nose and eyes. Contact a Foster care coordinator that day for further instruction.
- If a kitten is having diarrhea contact a foster care coordinator that day for further instruction. If an appointment is needed, please remember to bring a poop sample for an intestinal parasite screen (the fresher the better).
- If the kitten is not gaining weight daily, begin syringe feeding and giving subcutaneous fluids immediately as directed above. Also contact a foster care coordinator to alert them of the situation that day in case they need to be seen by a veterinarian.
- All other medical concerns please contact the foster care coordinator for further directions.

## Training Videos

- How To Feed A Kitten: [https://youtu.be/HAD\\_zDqpWHw](https://youtu.be/HAD_zDqpWHw)
- Another feeding video: [www.nehumanesociety.org/kittenfeeding](http://www.nehumanesociety.org/kittenfeeding)
- Supplies needed and prep work: [www.nehumanesociety.org/kittenfeedingsupplies](http://www.nehumanesociety.org/kittenfeedingsupplies)
- Clean up: [www.nehumanesociety.org/kittencleanup](http://www.nehumanesociety.org/kittencleanup)
- Info about the syringe: [www.nehumanesociety.org/syringeinfo](http://www.nehumanesociety.org/syringeinfo)
- How To Weigh A Kitten: [https://youtu.be/ehpq\\_lfQ-9o](https://youtu.be/ehpq_lfQ-9o)
- Subcutaneous Fluids: [https://youtu.be/\\_MK1x9ECprk](https://youtu.be/_MK1x9ECprk)

### Kitten Subcutaneous Fluids Dosing Chart

Kitten SQ Fluids Chart	
Using Norm-R or Plasmalyte BID	
Weight (lbs)	Amount Fluids (mls)
0.8-1.2lbs	20mls
1.2-2.0	25mls



**Kitten weight and feeding tracking chart**

Animal ID		Sex:	color			
Weigh:		SID before 7AM feeding				
Feed:		4 times a day (5 at veterinary direction)				
Amt/feeding:		refer to KMR feeding chart based on weight				
SQ fluids:		when not gaining weight give BID until 72 hours weight gain Or at veterinary direction – SID / BID * ____ days				
Amt fluid/tx:		refer to fluid chart based on weight				
+/-	date	weight	time fed	amount fed	amt fluids	comments
			7:30AM			
			11:00AM			
			3:00PM			
			6:30PM			
			7:30AM			
			11:00AM			
			3:00PM			
			6:30PM			
			7:30AM			
			11:00AM			
			3:00PM			
			6:30PM			
			7:30AM			
			11:00AM			
			3:00PM			
			6:30PM			
			7:30AM			
			11:00AM			
			3:00PM			
			6:30PM			
			7:30AM			
			11:00AM			
			3:00PM			
			6:30PM			

### KMR mixing instructions

1. Gently stir or shake 1 part powdered KMR into 2 parts warm water (a part can be a teaspoon, tablespoon, cup, etc.).
2. Once opened powdered KMR should be stored in the refrigerator/freezer. The powdered KMR is good for 3 months in the refrigerator and 6 months in the freezer.
3. Reconstituted KMR should be stored in the refrigerator and is only good to keep in the refrigerator for 24 hours.
4. Warm to room or body temperature before serving at each feeding. To do this, fill a bottle with mixed KMR from the container in the refrigerator (fill with how much is needed for the feeding based on the number of kittens). Warm the bottle of KMR in the bottle warmer. Test the temperature of the KMR before serving by placing a drop on your wrist to make sure it is not too hot.
5. Then use this warmed bottle for the particular feeding, drawing KMR from the bottle into new syringes for each kitten.
6. Discard the left over portion in the bottle after the feeding is complete and clean the bottles with soapy water and then sterilized according to the sterilizer manufacturing instructions.

### Feeding chart based on weight for 5 times daily feedings (using KMR)

<b>Weight (lbs)</b>	<b>Amt per feeding (mLs)</b>
0.80	19
0.85	20
0.90	21
0.95	23
1.00	24
1.05	25
1.10	26
1.15	27
1.20	28
1.25	30
1.30	31
1.35	32
1.40	33
1.45	34
1.50	36
1.55	37
1.60	38
1.65	39
1.70	40
1.75	42
1.80	43
1.85	44
1.90	45
1.95	46
2.00	47

Conversion Chart							
Weight in Pounds (lbs) to Weight in Grams							
Weight (lbs)	Weight (grams)		Weight (lbs)	Weight (grams)		Weight (lbs)	Weight (grams)
0.60	273		1.07	486		1.54	700
0.61	277		1.08	491		1.55	705
0.62	282		1.09	495		1.56	709
0.63	286		1.10	500		1.57	714
0.64	291		1.11	505		1.58	718
0.65	295		1.12	509		1.59	723
0.66	300		1.13	514		1.60	727
0.67	305		1.14	518		1.61	732
0.68	309		1.15	523		1.62	736
0.69	314		1.16	527		1.63	741
0.70	318		1.17	532		1.64	745
0.71	323		1.18	536		1.65	750
0.72	327		1.19	541		1.66	755
0.73	332		1.20	545		1.67	759
0.74	336		1.21	550		1.68	764
0.75	341		1.22	555		1.69	768
0.76	345		1.23	559		1.70	773
0.77	350		1.24	564		1.71	777
0.78	355		1.25	568		1.72	782
0.79	359		1.26	573		1.73	786
0.80	364		1.27	577		1.74	791
0.81	368		1.28	582		1.75	795
0.82	373		1.29	586		1.76	800
0.83	377		1.30	591		1.77	805
0.84	382		1.31	595		1.78	809
0.85	386		1.32	600		1.79	814
0.86	391		1.33	605		1.80	818
0.87	395		1.34	609		1.81	823
0.88	400		1.35	614		1.82	827
0.89	405		1.36	618		1.83	832
0.90	409		1.37	623		1.84	836
0.91	414		1.38	627		1.85	841
0.92	418		1.39	632		1.86	845
0.93	423		1.40	636		1.87	850
0.94	427		1.41	641		1.88	855
0.95	432		1.42	645		1.89	859
0.96	436		1.43	650		1.90	864
0.97	441		1.44	655		1.91	868
0.98	445		1.45	659		1.92	873
0.99	450		1.46	664		1.93	877
1.00	455		1.47	668		1.94	882
1.01	459		1.48	673		1.95	886
1.02	464		1.49	677		1.96	891
1.03	468		1.50	682		1.97	895
1.04	473		1.51	686		1.98	900
1.05	477		1.52	691		1.99	905
1.06	482		1.53	695		2.00	909