



THE BIRD CLINIC VETERINARY CORPORATION

THE “4” NUTRIENT GROUPS FOR PROPER AVIAN NUTRITION

These groups of foods **DO NOT** necessarily mean they are healthy or necessary for your pet bird, but are listed in this handout to illustrate what main nutrient group each of the listed foods fall into.

Proteins:

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Eggs | (White with yolk should be scrambled or hard boiled/grated. HIGH Cholesterol) |
| Cooked Chicken | (Small individual pieces and only fresh, not reheated as can be dangerous) |
| Cooked Legumes | (Lima beans, Lentils, Pinto, Kidney 15-bean soup – safest in this group) |
| Soy Products | (Estrogenic/High Protein. Many birds have had digestive problems with tofu) |
| NO red meat or pork | (Meat is <i>too high</i> in phosphorous. Ca:PO ₄ = 1:20. HIGH in fat). |
| NO shellfish | (Contains potential toxins). Swimming fish ok (salmon, tuna, trout, etc) |

Carbohydrates:

(Complex)

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Cooked Pasta | (Can be wheat, veggie) |
| Cooked Rice | (White or Wild) |
| Cooked Potatoes | (Mashed or chopped) |

(MOST vegetables are primarily carbohydrates, but will be listed under vitamin / mineral sources)

(Simple) Generally BAD for birds

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Fruits | (dried fruit MAGNIFIES the sugar concentration) |
| Sugars/syrups | (Can cause overgrowth of bad bacteria and kill birds – see toxin handout) |

Fat Sources:

| | |
|---|--|
| Seed Mixtures dependent on bird species | (No Sunflower - Very high in Fat and Estrogenic) |
| Nuts | (Very High fat, inadequate protein. <u>No benefit in most species of birds</u>) |
| Corn | (High % vegetable fat as well as simple carbohydrates) |

NO Cheese or dairy products! Birds cannot break down lactose and it can cause obstructive disorders and / or inflammatory bowel disease. (Please see cheese handout)

Vitamins / Minerals:

Two of the biggest deficiencies facing exotic bird species on seed diets:

Vitamin A: Please see the Vitamin A handout (www.thebirdclinic.com/Bird_Clinic_Handouts.htm)

Calcium: Please see Calcium handout on line (www.thebirdclinic.com/Bird_Clinic_Handouts.htm)

The four main nutrient groups need to be given to an exotic bird each day of his/her life! The examples above are in no way an exhaustive list, but are to demonstrate how close avian nutrition is to human nutrition. **The BIRD Clinic recommends a modern commercial pelleted diet which incorporates all the nutrient groups in a balance derived from over 50 years of research.** Please ask for species-specific recommendations. A good balanced diet can extend the life of your pet bird by 40+% compared to a diet of mainly seeds and nuts!

*This publication is part of The BIRD C News™ series to help educate bird owners. Produced by The BIRD Clinic Veterinary Corporation
200 S. Tustin Street, Suite E, Orange, CA 92866 714-633-2910. www.thebirdclinic.com May be reproduced with permission only.*