

## Weaning

The weaning process, i.e., encouraging the pups to get their nourishment from solid food, begins when the pups are given their first mush meal. As the puppies begin to get their nourishment from solid food, your CCI Breeder's milk supply will begin to diminish.

Many breeders start to become disinterested in feeding their pups once solid food is introduced which makes the weaning process easier. However, all moms and puppies take to the transition period differently so it is extremely important to be alert to potential problems.

The goal of weaning is to get the puppies on solid food and off of mom so her milk production is reduced to zero over a 2 week period. The process is gradual and takes the pups and mom through the following 5 steps.

- 1) Pups - starts on day 28 when the pups are 4 weeks old and consists of feeding a very liquid (soupy) mixture of weaning diet (which is just ground-up puppy kibble) and water. This mixture is offered 3 times a day for 2 days. (days 28-29)
  - a. Mom - still eating per the feeding chart "lactation days 22-28" however you start to control her access to the puppies. She nurses them only after the pups have been fed their weaning meal.
- 2) Step 2 is the same as step 1 except the amount of water in the mixture is reduced (days 30-32).
  - a. Mom- same as step 1 except on day 29 you reduce the amount of food to mom per the feeding chart.
- 3) Step 3 moves to puppy kibble softened with water. (days 33-37)
  - a. Mom - food intake is further reduced at day 33 per the feeding chart.
- 4) Step 4 moves the pups to a mixture of softened and dry kibble. (days 38-42)
  - a. At day 38 Mom is back to her normal (pre-breeding) food intake 2 times a day. But still eating Premium.
- 5) Step 5 moves the pups to dry kibble only. Day 43 forward.
  - a. Start migrating Mom off Premium food and back to her regular food per the example given in the feeding chart.

### Step 1 Days 28-29

This step starts when the puppies are 28 days of age. The puppies should be offered a wet gruel made from the supplied weaning diet and warm water. This mixture will be rather soupy which allows the puppies to easily lap up the gruel. The table below shows the amount of weaning formula plus water to make depending on the number of pups. If you have more than 12 pups an amount equal to 12 pups will likely have enough for more than 12. Allow the mixture to sit and absorb the water for 15 to 20 minutes prior to serving. If the mixture is too dry (not soupy) add more water. Depending on the temperature of the water that was added and how long the

mixture has set, make sure that the mixture is cool enough to serve.

Offer them this mixture 3 times per day for 2 days (days 28-29). If the amount you Made was too much, you can mix less for subsequent meals.

Number of Pups	Amount of Weaning Diet	Amount of Warm Water
2	½ cup	1 ½ cups
3	¾ cups	2 ¼ cups
4	1 cup	3 cups
5	1 ¼ cup	3 ¾ cups
6	1 ½ cup	4 ½ cups
7	1 ¾ cup	5 ¼ cups
8	2 cups	6 cups
9	2 ¼ cup	6 ¾ cups
10	2 ½ cups	7 ½ cups
11	2 ¾ cups	8 ¼ cups
12	3 cups	9 cups

Do not be surprised if there is food left over. This is their first exposure to anything other than moms milk so they probably won't eat all that you prepare. They will probably wear more than they eat.

At first the puppies will wear more of the mixture than they consume so it is advisable to place the puppies in an area that is easily cleaned. It should not be necessary to bathe the puppies following the introduction of gruel as your CCI breeder will gladly perform this duty.

At this time you can start limiting moms access to the pups. You should plan on controlling her contact with the pups from the start of weaning until turn in. At the start of weaning mom is at her peak lactation.

### Step 2 Days 30-32

Use the following table of weaning diet plus water over the next 3 days. This mixture reduces the amount of water in the mix. Continue to feed gruel 3 times per day.

Number of Pups	Amount of Weaning Diet	Amount of Warm Water
2	2/3 cup	1 1/3 cups
3	1 cups	2 cups
4	1 1/3 cup	2 2/3 cups
5	1 2/3 cup	3 1/3 cups
6	2 cup	4 cups
7	2 1/3 cup	4 2/3 cups
8	2 2/3 cups	5 1/3 cups
9	3 cup	6 cups
10	3 1/3 cups	6 2/3 cups
11	3 2/3 cups	7 1/3 cups

12	4 cups	8 cups
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Begin to offer the puppies clean fresh water in a separate container. Up to this point, the breeder's milk has been the sole source of fluids. Since the puppies become less dependent on mother's milk for nourishment, their source of hydration is also decreased. It is critical to ensure that each puppy is acquiring adequate intake of both food and water. A puppy that is resisting the weaning process or who is simply a slow learner can become dehydrated very quickly.

### Step 3 Days 33-37

Feed the pups 3 times a day per the table below. Make sure that fresh water is available for the pups at all times. The amount of warm water shown in the following table is variable as you may need to add more on day 33 and less by day 37. The goal is to get the pups to move to dryer food from days 33 to 37.

Number of Pups	Amount of Puppy Kibble	Amount of Warm Water
2	1 cup	1 to 2 cups
3	1 1/2 cups	1 1/2 to 2 cups
4	2 cups	2 to 3 cups
5	2 1/2 cups	2 1/2 to 4 cups
6	3 cups	3 to 5 cups
7	3 1/2 cups	3 1/2 to 6 cups
8	4 cups	4 to 7 cups
9	4 1/2 cups	4 1/2 to 8 cups
10	5 cups	5 to 9 cups
11	5 1/2 cups	5 1/2 to 10 cups
12	6 cups	6 to 11 cups

### Step 4 Days 38-42

Feed the following amounts to the pups 3 times a day. Always have fresh water available for the pups.

Number of Pups	Amount of Softened and Dry Kibble
2	1/2 cup kibble softened with 1/2 cup water plus 1/2 cup dry kibble
3	3/4 cup kibble softened with 3/4 cup water plus 3/4 cup dry kibble
4	1 cup kibble softened with 1 cup water plus 1 cup dry kibble
5	1 1/4 cup kibble softened with 1 1/4 cup water plus 1 1/4 cup dry kibble
6	1 1/2 cup kibble softened with 1 1/2 cup water plus 1 1/2 cup dry kibble
7	1 3/4 cup kibble softened with 1 3/4 cup water plus 1 3/4 cup dry kibble
8	2 cup kibble softened with 2 cup water plus 2 cups dry kibble
9	2 1/4 cup kibble softened with 2 1/4 cups water plus 2 1/4 cup dry kibble
10	2 1/2 cup kibble softened with 2 1/2 cups water plus 2 1/2 cups dry kibble
11	2 3/4 cup kibble softened with 2 3/4 cups water plus 2 3/4 cups dry kibble
12	3 cups kibble softened with 3 cups water plus 3 cups dry kibble

### Step 5 Day 43 Forward

At this point, the pups are 6 weeks old and should be comfortable with eating dry Kibble. Feed the following amounts of dry kibble 3 times a day.

Number of Pups	Amount of dry kibble
2	1 to 1 ½ cups
3	1 ½ to 2 ¼ cups
4	2 to 3 cups
5	2 ½ to 3 ¾ cups
6	3 to 4 ½ cups
7	3 ½ to 5 ¼ cups
8	4 to 6 cups
9	4 ½ to 6 ¾ cups
10	5 to 7 ½ cups
11	5 ½ to 8 ¼ cups
12	6 to 8 ½ cups

At six weeks of age, the puppies should be completely able to obtain sufficient levels of both food and water. Ideally, your CCI breeder should be completely separated from the litter for at least 3 days to prevent nursing. If this is not possible, some puppies may continue to nurse.