

Weight Loss Makes Financial Sense

Many of the diseases associated with obesity necessitate frequent trips to the veterinarian, costly medication, and ultimately a shortened lifespan and decreased quality of life.



Helping your pets to achieve an optimal weight will not only lengthen their lives and increase their health and comfort, but also has the potential to save you unnecessary veterinary costs.

For instance, an overweight dog with arthritis may need to take a **Non Steroidal Anti Inflammatory (NSAID)** twice daily to maintain comfort and mobility. At \$2.00 per dose (average cost) this is approximately \$720 per year. By helping this same dog to achieve ideal body weight, we can alleviate the extra stress to the joints, and reduce the inflammation within the body which contributes to arthritis. If we achieve even a 50% reduction in the need for NSAIDs (once daily instead of twice) this translates into a savings of \$360 per year.

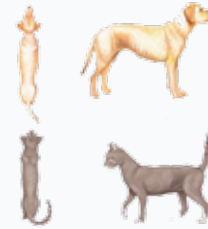
Additional savings can be achieved by feeding **Hills Science Diet** or **Hills Prescription Diet** pet foods formulated nutritionally complete while promoting weight loss. Most diets on the market are **NOT** tested for **WEIGHT LOSS**. Instead they are formulated for weight **MAINTENANCE**. This includes diets labeled as **LIGHT** or **REDUCED CALORIE**. While feeding less of these diets can result in weight loss, it means that your pet may be missing out on necessary nutrients, thus resulting in a hungry feeling. Prescription pet foods require that you feed less and still provide complete nutrition. This means that bag for bag, even though these diets may cost more, they last longer (per bag) and promote a fuller feeling in your pet resulting in less spent over the long term and a much happier pet.

Ask about our mobile house call services

Your Pet's Body Condition Score

1 Body Score **VERY THIN**

Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance. No discernible body fat. Obvious loss of muscle mass.



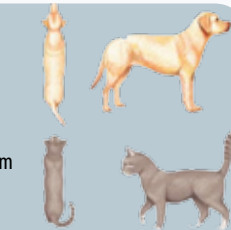
2 Body Score **UNDERWEIGHT**

Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat. Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible. Pelvic bones becoming prominent. Obvious waist.



3 Body Score **IDEAL**

Ribs palpable without excess fat covering. Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above. Abdomen tucked up when viewed.



4 Body Score **OVERWEIGHT**

Ribs palpable with difficulty; heavy fat cover. Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent or barely visible. Abdominal tuck may be present.



5 Body Score **OBES**

Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine and base of tail. Waist and abdominal tuck absent. Fat deposit on neck and limbs. Obvious abdominal distention.



Your pet's weight loss goals _____ lbs.

Your pet's next weigh in date: _____.

pet health awareness

Pet Obesity

Obesity is a disease – learn the facts to keep your pet happy and healthy

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ABOUT OUR
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PROGRAMS



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Obesity is defined as a weight that is 20% over ideal body weight

How does this happen?

While many of us have been led to believe that pets can self regulate how much they eat, this is entirely untrue.

In the wild, dogs and cats never know when or where their next meal will come from, so they eat when they can as much as they can – even when it is not good for them.

While treats are an important part of the bond shared between a pet and a family, many of the treats we offer our pets are **very calorie rich** and although small by our standards, can contribute to obesity in our pets.

For example 1oz of cheese is the canine equivalent of 2 ½ cheeseburgers and the feline equivalent of 3½ cheeseburgers.

50%
of pets in the U.S
are overweight
or obese!



Pet Weight Translation

Did you realize a 12 pound Yorkie is the same as an average human female weighing 218 pounds and a 14 pound cat is equivalent to a 237 pound man? A 90 pound female Labrador Retriever is equal to a 186 pound 5' 4" female or 217 pound 5' 9" male.

Obesity is a Disease



Obesity in pets is considered a disease requiring veterinary care because of the changes that are occurring with body metabolism and the likelihood that other disease processes can result in a deterioration in your pet's health.

Fat cells (adipocytes) are active in the body. They secrete several chemicals into the body that can alter metabolism and bodily functions.

Leptin: Leptin contributes to the insatiable appetite. In a normal pet, when a meal is consumed and fat is stored in the adipocytes, the fat cells secrete leptin to signal to the body that all is good, fat stores are in place, time to stop eating. In overweight pets adipocytes are continually secreting leptin and the body becomes immune to the message and appetite is not turned off.

Adiponectin: Adiponectin is also released after a meal and in normal pets it protects the heart and vasculature system from inflammation. In obese pets fat cells tire and eventually stop secreting adiponectin.

Tumor Necrosis Factor alpha: As adiponectin becomes overly full in obese pets, they begin to secrete TNF-alpha which increases inflammation in the body resulting in a condition that can exacerbate other inflammatory conditions such as irritable bowel, arthritis and allergies.

Conditions Associated with Obesity

The overweight pet is not a healthy pet. These extra pounds can cause a variety of health problems including:

- Diabetes mellitus
- Hypothyroidism
- Hepatic lipidosis
- Joint stress/arthritis
- High blood pressure
- Decreased immune function
- Heart disease
- Heat intolerance
- Respiratory disease
- Certain allergies
- Certain cancers

Recognizing & Treating Obesity

Your bathroom scale and your eyes are the best tools you have to determine if your pet is overweight. Your pets are considered obese if they weigh 20% or more above their optimal weight and would be called overweight if they are between their optimal weight and 20% over. The "ideal" weight for a dog is approximately the weight where the last 3 to 5 ribs are just barely visible or can be felt with a very light touch. For cats, you should be able to feel their ribs when you are stroking them, and their stomach should not have a rounded appearance. Both dogs and cats should have an "hourglass" shape to their torso, when viewed from above. It is better from a health perspective to be a little too thin than to be a little too heavy.

Treating obesity – For both dogs and cats, you will need to develop a weight reduction plan in consultation with your veterinarian. It will include ideas for exercise as well as a special reducing diet.

Dogs – Burn off more calories with your dogs by taking them for a walk around the block, a romp in the park, or anywhere they can go for a run, jog or swim. Reducing the amount of food your dog gets in a day, and possibly spreading it out over 4-6 meals a day is a simple diet plan. There are also veterinary prescription and low calorie diets available.

Cats – Exercise can be more of a challenge with cats, especially indoor-only cats. Try to add additional play time. Diet is the most important part of a weight loss program for your cat, and it is very important that you have veterinary supervision. **Cats have unique nutritional requirements and simply reducing how much food you give your cat could lead to rapid excessive weight loss which can have serious consequences.** Work closely with your veterinarian to develop and monitor a diet plan for your cat.