



Presqu'ile Animal Hospital



Weight Loss Program

Your pet has been diagnosed with a weight condition.

Obesity is the term used when a pet is more than 20% overweight.

We want to help you help your pet with a weight loss plan, so please review this package and let us know what questions you have.



Our weight loss program focuses on methods of feeding and nutrition. Embracing the natural instincts of our pets will help improve their overall quality of life and also help us with managing their body condition.

Main points:

1. Weighing dry food on a kitchen scale that is accurate to 0.1g is much more accurate than measuring food with a scoop. For cats and small dogs, even 1-2 grams of pet food can make a difference.
2. Don't cut out treats entirely. We don't want to stop you from giving treats, but we do need to account for the calories for each one and limit those calories to 10% of your pet's daily intake.
3. Increase frequency of feedings for cats and introduce food puzzles or balls to help decrease begging behaviors and extend mealtimes.
4. Feeding canned food is always beneficial for weight loss in pets. It is lower in calories, more filling and improves hydration. Cats especially benefit from a mostly canned food diet.
5. Involve the whole family in your pet's weight loss goal and ensure everyone is on the same page.

Mealtimes and Feeding

For cats especially, we often resort to "free-feeding" or feeding a couple of larger meals per day.

We encourage at least 2 portions of canned food per day with dry food provided in measured amounts throughout the day in food puzzles or automatic feeders.

<https://catfriendly.com/be-a-cat-friendly-caregiver/how-to-feed-a-cat/>

For dogs, meal-feeding 2-3 times daily helps with portion control, satiation and with preventing overfeeding.

Both dogs and cats benefit from food puzzles if they are willing to give it a try. They can be homemade or purchased and vary in difficulty.



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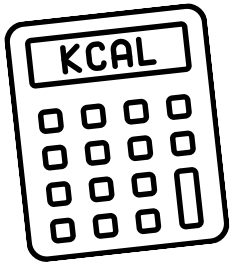


Pet Store Food vs Veterinary Food

Why can't I use pet store food for weight loss?

The large majority of pet store foods are not built to achieve weight loss. They are formulated to ensure pets receive the minimum daily requirements for nutrients when fed according to the guidelines on each individual bag. When you reduce below those guidelines, you risk creating a nutritional deficiency. We are unable to calculate below the feeding guidelines to provide a reduced caloric intake in those cases. If the company has a veterinary nutritionist on staff, they may be able to help you come up with a reduced calorie feeding plan.

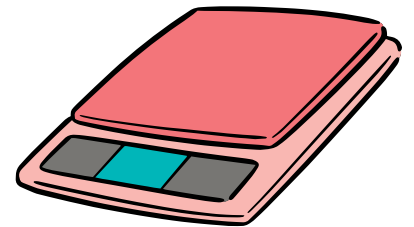
In some instances, it is just true overfeeding at play, and being more careful about weighing food, moderating treats and being conscious of what is being eaten is enough to help. For most pets, this is not enough to get the weight loss we need.



In contrast, the veterinary weight loss diets that we use are built with caloric restriction as the main focus. It will provide appropriate nutrition despite the lower calories and also includes additional fiber to help pets feel full. We are not risking nutritional deficiency and can provide accurate calculations for using these diets. We also have access to our veterinary nutritionists who can help with adjustments to feeding plans along the way. Consults with the veterinary nutrition teams at Purina, Royal Canin and Hills are free of charge to our clients.

Weighing Food vs Measuring Food

Sometimes a single gram of food is enough to make a difference to a weight loss plan.



Using a gram scale to weigh out portions of dry food (and treats in some cases) is an important first step in a weight loss program.

For more details and help with this, visit the following blog by scanning the QR code:

<https://thehealthierpetwithin.ca/the-scoop-on-portion-control/>





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Body Condition Scoring vs Weight

When working on weight loss, our goal is to achieve ideal body condition, not ideal weight. For some pets, while we are losing fat, we are gaining muscle and we may see less of a change on the scale, but this is why we always focus on body condition and weight together.



For videos on how to perform Body Condition Scoring at home, please scan the codes below

Feline Body
Condition Scoring

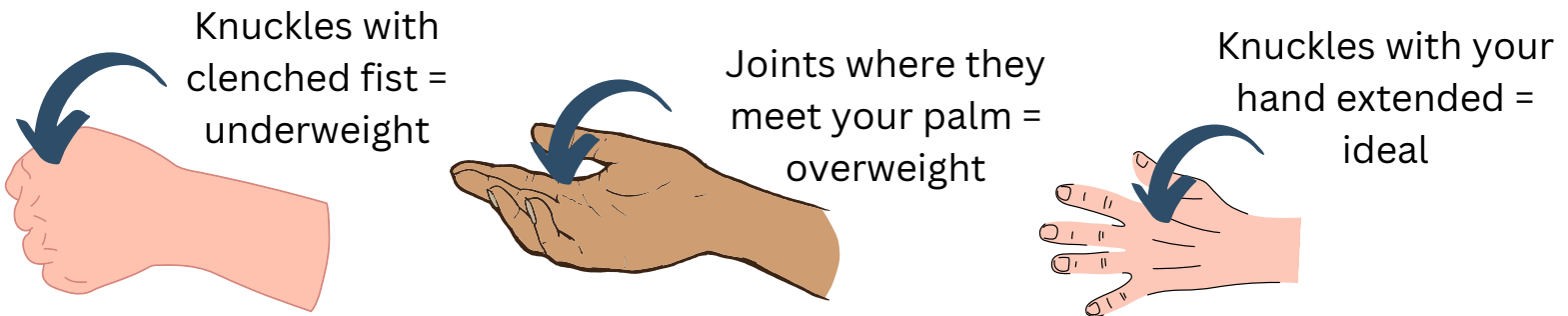


Canine Body
Condition Scoring



The Knuckle Test

When feeling your pet's ribs, compare how they feel to your own hand. If you run your fingers over parts of your hand, this helps you to understand the ideal feel of ribs under the skin.



Resources

Pet to Human Weight Comparison Calculators
<https://www.petobesityprevention.org/pet-weight-translator>

Healthy Treat Options and Calorie Counts
<https://vetnutrition.tufts.edu/2021/10/treat-options-for-dogs-and-cats-without-unbalancing-their-diet/>

World Small Animal Veterinary Association Nutrition Information
<https://wsava.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/WSAVA-Global-Nutrition-Toolkit-English.pdf>

Pet Food Information and Calorie Calculators
petnutritionalliance.org



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Our Program

At the time of the initial diagnosis, we will send home this information package and a nutrition questionnaire.

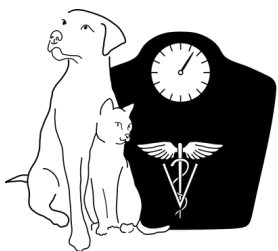
Once we receive the nutrition questionnaire, we will provide initial feedback and book a weight consultation appointment if you decide to proceed with one of our diet options. At that appointment, you will meet with a Veterinary Technician, review all recommendations and receive a weight loss package, which includes a feeding ball or puzzle, treats and a gram scale. It is important to bring anyone responsible for feeding or treating to this appointment so that we can all work together to make a plan.

Transition onto the new food over 7-10 days and then start with new calculated feeding amounts.

Weight and BCS check in hospital every 2-4 weeks and make any necessary adjustments.

Once the goal weight is reached, you will receive 1 month of free food.

Need Extra Help?



GRAHAM
MOBILE VETERINARY
WEIGHT MANAGEMENT SERVICES



Dr. Graham provides individual weight loss counseling and supports to owners.

