

# HEALTHY WEIGHT

## OBESITY INCREASES THE RISK OF:

Diabetes  
Torn ACL  
Heart Problems  
Thyroid Disease  
Kidney Disease

Arthritis  
Back Pain  
Cushing's Disease  
Pancreatic Disease  
Reduced Immunity

Shorter Life!

Many of these diseases are not immediately apparent, so by the time you notice something your dog may already be quite sick!

## HOW DO YOU KNOW YOUR DOG OR CAT IS OVERWEIGHT?

### Ideal Weight:

- The ribs and spine are not protruding but are easily felt, with just a little fat padding them
- When looking down from above you can clearly see a waist

### You know your dog needs to lose weight (no matter what breed) if:

- You're not sure where their rib cage ends
- When you look down from above & there is definitely *no* waist
- When you look from the side there is no "tuck up" in the loin

## WHAT CAN CAUSE OBESITY *OTHER THAN IMPROPER FEEDING*?

- Endocrine Disease (Cushings, Diabetes, Hypothyroidism)
  - Low Thyroid is very common in dogs, get a full panel test done.
- Medication
- Lack of exercise (if they lack interest there may be pain)
- If you suspect it's not just the food, please take them to your vet for tests.

## STEPS TO WEIGHT LOSS

- Reduce or eliminate treats (less than 10% of the day's *calories*), choose low-carb treats.
- Measure the food! Use a measuring cup and feed within the recommended guidelines.
- Feed twice a day to keep metabolism regular
- Feed a lower calorie diet that emphasizes lower fat and carbs.
- Increase protein (maintain muscle so they can burn calories, satisfy hunger, and ensure adequate amino acids in the diet)

## Benefits

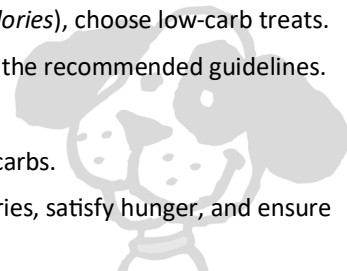
- Stable, healthy weight
- Stronger Immune System
- Proper Endocrine Balance
- Improved Energy
- Longer Life
- More Comfortable Joints
- Lower Risk of Disease

## Product Suggestions

- Lower-Fat Raw Food Diets
- Acana Light & Fit Dry Food
- Orijen Fit & Trim Dry Food
- Foraging Toys

## Recipes & Help

- [freshfoodconsultants.org](http://freshfoodconsultants.org)
- [animaldietformulator.com](http://animaldietformulator.com)
- The Forever Dog Life (book)



- Moderately increase fiber (satisfy hunger) with low-carb options.
- For cats especially: eliminate dry food
- For short-term only: reduce calories by 5%-20% . Commercial pet food companies should be able to provide kcals/cup so you can calculate how much to reduce.

If using a reduced amount of a commercial diet for more than a month have it analyzed so you can supplement correctly. We recommend the consultants at [animaldietformulator.com](http://animaldietformulator.com) for this purpose.

### **WHAT NOT TO DO!**

- Don't reduce protein. Choose a diet with plenty of protein, especially if feeding below the recommended amount for any length of time.
- No crash diets! Reducing calories by more than 20% can quickly result in nutritional deficiencies and a slowing of the metabolism

### **STRATEGIES**

- **Feed fresh food!**
  - Raw food diets help dogs & cats normalize their weight because they are providing nutrients in the best form for their body, and because they are low in carbohydrates.

Choose raw food diets that are lower in fat and calories. This will allow you to feed more food, helping to ensure better nutrition. Avoid diets with a 1:1 (or nearly so) Protein to Fat ratio. For example: a good choice might be a diet with 16% protein and 7% fat.

  - Home-cooked diets can be customized to your pet's needs using a recipe designed for weight-loss.
- Use foraging toys to engage the pet in longer feeding times and to take the place of high-calorie chew treats
- If you're going to add veggies to the diet, be sure you're adding them to a high-protein food, and keeping the veggie amount low (don't overdo the substitution, you don't want to unbalance the diet)
- Increase exercise—this allows you feed more (and worry less about nutritional deficiencies as noted above)
- Use interactive toys for variety (cats especially)
- Swimming burns calories, start slow (20 minutes is like 2 hours of walking)
- If your pet is begging, engage them in an activity
- Play a game
- Go for a walk
- Do some training (use treats the size of a pea as rewards)
- Love your pet with a massage instead of something to eat

