

What Shape Is Your Pet?

Did you know an estimated 50% of dogs and cats in the United States are overweight or obese, and those numbers are only increasing. We are killing our pets when it comes to generosity with food. Most dogs and cats are getting larger for the same reason people are too much food and not enough exercise, and when it comes to a cats and dogs even a little extra weight can be large problem.



Overweight pets have a lot of the same problems overweight people do. They are prone to diabetes, joint, ligament and tendon difficulties, and breathing and heart challenges. Overweight cats can even develop skin problems from not being able to groom themselves properly. When your pet is obese their comfort and longevity of life are compromised.

How do you know if your pet is overweight? Healthy pets have a little padding, but when it comes to cats and dogs, a little is plenty. When you rub your hands over the ribs of your pet the skin should move easily back and forth, and you should be able to feel the ribs. Your pet should have an "hour glass" shape to them, and at the bottom of their rib cage their "waist" should be defined.



It's not as difficult for pets to slim down as it is for their human counterparts. They can't open refrigerators, grab the car keys to run out for fast food or use a phone to call in for pizza. What and how much pets eat is completely dependent on what is fed to them. And we may groan at the idea of getting off that comfy couch to exercise, our pets however are always willing and ready for a walk, game of fetch (or chase), or some play with a toy on a string. Pets love physical activity, especially if their owners are involved.

Once your veterinarian has determined that your pet has no underlying health conditions that could make exercise dangerous, take time out of your schedule to walk your dog or play with your cat daily. Whatever diet you and your veterinarian choose, persevere and stick to it. Do not express your love for your pet with food. If you must, substitute mini rice cakes and small carrot sticks for the occasional dog treat. It may be difficult in the beginning, but don't give in. Your pet will live a happier and longer life if they are not obese.

If you're concerned about Fido or Fluffy's weight, see one of our technicians for more information.

