

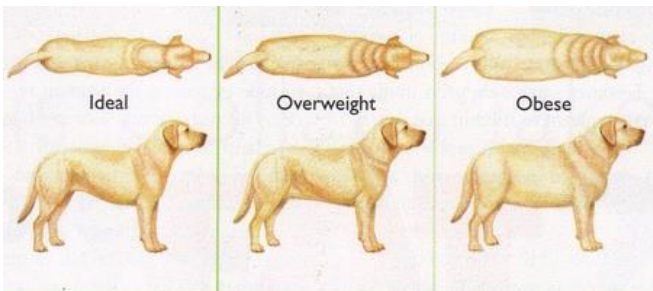


Pet Obesity

Obesity is the most common **preventable** disease in pets. An estimated 45% of all U.S. pets are overweight or obese, according to the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention. Excess weight can cause chronic health problems, and an average 15% shorter life span for your pet. Obesity is the most common nutritional disease in dogs and cats. It's more common with advancing age and in females.

Obese pets—those with a 15% increase over optimum body weight have an increased risk for:

- Cancers of all types
- Diabetes mellitus
- Heart disease and hypertension
- Osteoarthritis and faster degeneration of joints
- Urinary bladder stones
- Anesthetic complications
- Chronic inflammatory disease
- Intolerance to heat and exercise
- Impaired reproductive ability
- **Shortened life span**



<p>Ribs can be felt. There is a slight waist when viewed from above.</p>	<p>Ribs are difficult to feel. There is no waist when viewed from above.</p>	<p>Ribs are very difficult to feel. When viewed from above, there is no waist and a broad back.</p>
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How do I know if my pet is overweight?

The very first step in dealing with an overweight or obese dog is to recognize and acknowledge that there is a problem.

Unfortunately, we are inundated with images in the media of dogs that are consistently too heavy, which makes it challenging to understand what **normal** looks like. Your veterinarian can assist with an assessment.

If you're unsure of what your pet's optimum weight should be, perform this simple test: Place your hands on your pet's rib cage with your thumbs on the back.

- If you feel the ribs easily, your pet is considered to be normal weight.

- If you can feel fat between the skin and ribs or the ribs are difficult to feel, your pet is overweight.

- If you **can't** feel the ribs, your pet is obese.

In some pets, particularly cats, a large abdomen that hangs down may indicate obesity. It is important to have your veterinarian assess for your pet's weight to rule out other diseases, such as heart, kidney, or glandular disease, including thyroid or Cushing's disease.

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How can I help my pet lose weight?

If your animal is overweight, there are usually painless methods for losing those unhealthy pounds. With careful dietary management and oversight by your veterinarian, changes in diet and lifestyle can lead to a much more comfortable life. Routine walks and playtime combined with sensible feedings can avert the need for medical intervention.

Ideal pet weight ranges

Beagle	18-30 lbs
Bulldog	40-50 lbs
Labrador retriever	55-80 lbs
German shepherd	70-95 lbs
Poodle (miniature)	11 lbs
Yorkshire terrier	7-8 lbs
Miniature schnauzer	11-15 lbs
Domestic cat	8-10 lbs
Persian cat	7-12 lbs
Siamese cat	5-10 lbs
Maine coon cat	10-25 lbs

It is **not** appropriate to simply reduce the volume of their current food. This will cause malnourishment over time. Generally weight loss will occur if an animal consumes 1-2% of its body weight in hydrated food per day. Weight maintenance requires 3-5 % of body weight per day. Minimum daily requirements of nutrients still must be met.

Daily caloric needs for pets

10 lb cat	275 calories
10 lb dog	300 calories
20 lb dog	500 calories
50 lb dog	1,200 calories

Please contact Always Helpful for professional recommendations if your animal needs to lose weight.