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SITS & WIGGLES

The Newsletter of the Animal Clinic of Chardon

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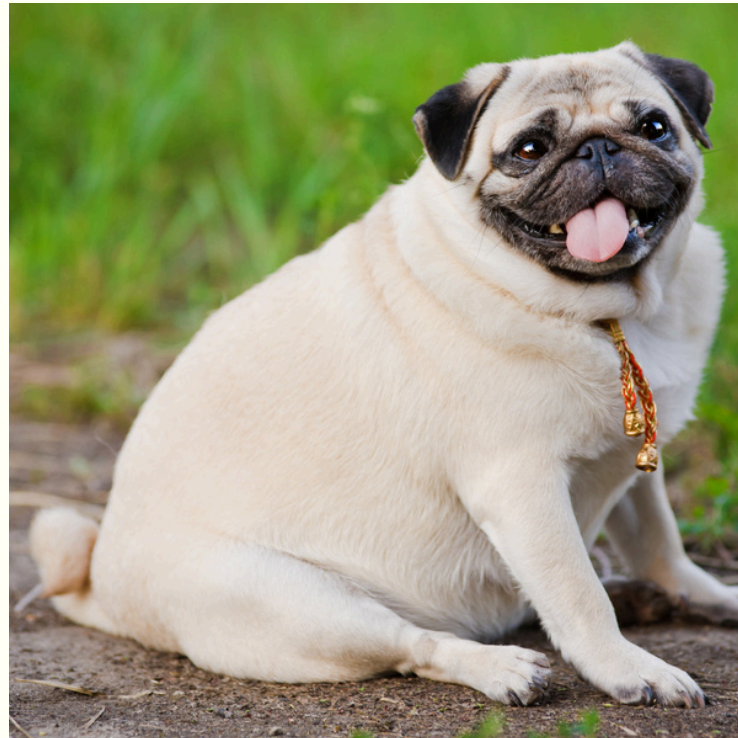
YOUR PET'S HEALTHY WEIGHT

Reaching and maintaining a healthy weight can reduce your pet's risk of disease and injury and gives them the best chance of a long, healthy, quality life. Your veterinarian can help you determine whether your pet's weight is healthy and can work with you to develop a weight management plan based on your pet's individual needs.

Benefits of a healthy weight

Keeping your pet at a healthy weight lowers their risk of certain health problems like arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, breathing problems, back problems, kidney disease, and some forms of cancer. It also can reduce your pet's risk of joint injuries associated with excess weight. And if your pet has arthritis, maintaining a healthy weight can make it easier to manage any associated pain or discomfort.

On the other hand, excess weight can increase your pet's risk of issues during anesthesia, reduce their life expectancy, and impair their quality of life. For these and other reasons, keeping your pet trim gives them the best chance of a longer, healthier, and pain-free life. (Continued on next page)



YOUR PET'S HEALTHY WEIGHT (CONTINUED)

Tips for reducing your pet's weight

It's probably no surprise, but there's no one-size-fits-all approach or magic remedy to help your pet shed excess pounds. What works for one pet doesn't necessarily work for another pet.

Reaching and maintaining a healthy weight requires a commitment to a healthier lifestyle that balances the calories consumed with the calories used by the body for normal functions and activity. For overweight pets, even a modest reduction in weight can significantly reduce the chance of some life-threatening diseases.

In simplest terms, weight loss involves reducing your pet's calorie intake and increasing their activity level to burn more calories. Be patient. It often takes longer to lose weight than it did for your pet to gain it.

Partner with your veterinarian

Working with your veterinarian, make an honest assessment of your pet's health and weight. Does your pet have any medical problems that have been caused—or made worse—by excess weight? Is your pet's weight putting them at a higher risk of health problems? Focus on what matters: your pet's good health and long life.

Understand that it's not about you

Your veterinarian's honest assessment of your pet's weight and health isn't a judgment of your ability to care for your pet. It's not about you; it's about your pet's health.

Make a family commitment

A commitment to reach and maintain a healthy weight for your pet requires a commitment from the entire family. A weight loss plan isn't going to work as well if family members sneak your pet extra food or treats. Remind your family that there are many ways other than food to show love for your family pet.


Feed a nutritious and healthy diet



All pets require a balanced, nutritious diet. If weight loss is the goal, simply feeding your pet less of their regular food may cause them to miss out on important nutrients. Another thing to consider: the suggested feeding amount on the pet food label might not be the best amount for your pet. Your veterinarian can help you decide which food choices—and amounts—are best based on your pet's individual needs.

To help your pet feel satisfied with the food they're given, try using a special bowl, mat, or food puzzle that makes it harder for them to gulp their food, and slows their eating. You also can try toys that release food in small amounts—just be careful to keep the total daily amount of food within a healthy amount. Smaller, more frequent feedings may also help. If you feed your pet kibble, you could even save a small portion of the regular amount to give as treats. (Continued on next page)



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Online Store Promos



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Use code PETWEEK to save 15% on your entire order - valid for a one-time purchase through our online store. Excludes medications not included. Other restrictions apply. Offer cannot be combined. Only one coupon can be used per order. Valid 6/1/25 - 6/30/25



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YOUR PET'S HEALTHY WEIGHT (CONTINUED)

Look out for other calorie sources

When it comes to treats, be careful. Although you might find it hard to resist those sad, begging eyes, the extra calories from treats and other food sources outside your pet's regular diet quickly can add up. To help fend off weight gain, a good practice is to limit treats to less than 10% of your pet's daily calorie needs, which your veterinarian can help you determine. Then, reduce the amount of their regular food by an amount roughly equal to the calories contained in any treats given.

Remember: Food isn't love

There are better ways than food treats to reward your pet and show your love. A walk or other activity, praise or attention, head scratch or belly rub, or toys—things your pet enjoys—can be just as rewarding, and in some cases even help with weight management. If your pet generally receives food rewards instead of these other things, they may begin to rely on food for comfort.

Whenever your pet begs or cries for food, try taking them for a walk or playing with them. Positive rewards like praise, petting, and play can strengthen your relationship with your pet, and support a healthy lifestyle.

Set goals

Weight loss can be a journey, and having goals along the way can help you appreciate your pet's progress, even when that progress seems slow. Gradual weight loss is actually a good thing, as rapid weight loss can lead to or signal serious health problems.

Your veterinarian can work with you to develop realistic, achievable goals for reducing your pet's weight in a healthy manner. Ask for recommendations on healthier eating and exercise that will produce a reasonable and safe rate of weight loss based on your pet's overall health.

Make it fun

Supporting your pet in an active, healthy lifestyle benefits the entire family. Experts recommend that dogs have at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day, with cats getting three, 5-minute sessions of intense play. A wearable pet activity monitor can be a fun way to keep track of your pet's activity level. Find activities you enjoy that can include your pet, and the journey will be more enjoyable for all of you.

Monitor and record progress

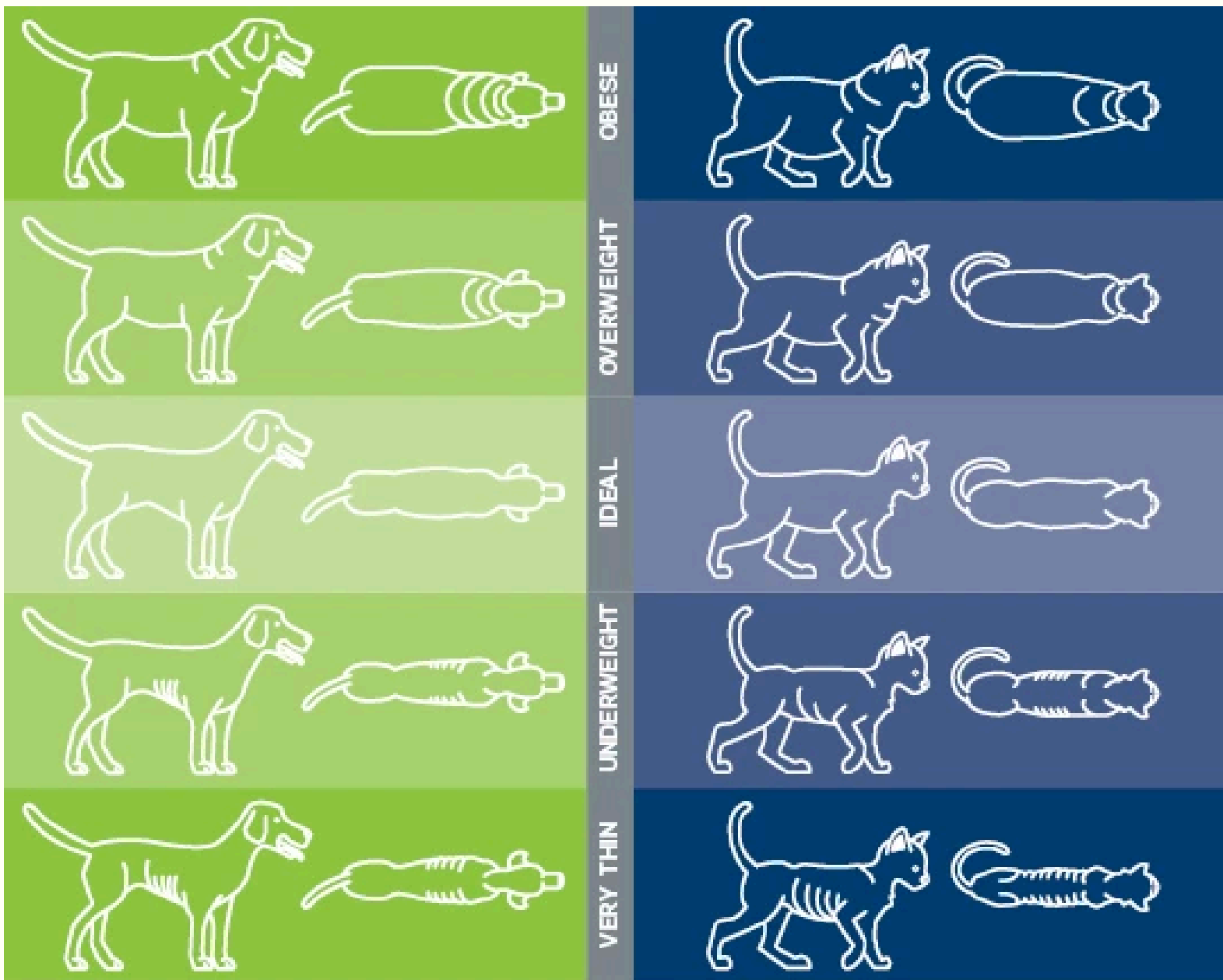
Once you've set reasonable goals to achieve and maintain your pet's healthy weight, be sure to monitor and record your pet's progress. As with all weight loss programs, there will be successes and there will be missteps. By monitoring and recording your pet's progress, you can determine what's working and what's not, and work with your veterinarian to adjust the program accordingly.

**“Pets are humanizing.
They remind us we
have an obligation and
responsibility to
preserve and nurture
and care for all life.”
— James Cromwell**

ACOC Birthdays
Dr. Jessica DeMarco-
5/14
Kaylee - 6/25
Nicole - 6/25



HOW DO I KNOW IF MY PET'S WEIGHT IS HEALTHY?



Start by having an open and honest conversation with your veterinarian about your pet's weight. They can evaluate your pet's overall health, check their weight, and offer personalized recommendations for nutrition and exercise. Keep in mind, a healthy weight isn't just about the number on the scale—your vet can also show you how to assess your pet's body condition by examining their shape and feeling key areas of their body.

