



Animal Clinic of Chardon

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SEPTEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER



Did you know?

Veterinarians determine if a pet is overweight or obese by its body condition score (BCS). Veterinarians assess the amount of stored fat and assign a number to score if a pet is underweight, overweight, or just right.

22% of dog owners and 15% of cat owners said their pet's weight was normal when it was actually overweight or obese.

The heaviest dog ever reported by the Guinness Book of World Records was Zorba, an English Mastiff. He reached a weight of 343 pounds!

Special Deals!

Heartgard

Buy 12 doses, get a \$12 rebate

Heartgard & NexGard

Buy 12 doses of Heartgard and 12 doses of NexGard, get \$50 rebate

NexGard

Buy 6 doses of NexGard, get 1 dose free (Cannot be combined with other rebates)

3 Pet Food Label Myths

With so many pet food options, choosing the right diet can be tricky. As your veterinary team, we can help you select the best foods based on our experience with many pets, ignoring the blizzard of marketing ploys designed to appeal to your emotional needs rather than your pets' nutritional needs.

Myth 1: Foods labeled premium are always better for your pet.

Truth: Some premium food companies may call out other manufacturers for using ingredients like corn or meat meals, knowing full well that pets do not need ingredients; they need the nutrients that are contained in ingredients. The nutrients contained in those ingredients are more important than the ingredients themselves. Manufacturers, nutritionists and pet owners simply can't predict a food's performance based on its ingredient list. There are too many unknowns: the amount of the ingredient present in the food, the quality of the ingredient or the exact identity and nutrient composition of the ingredient.

Myth 2: The best food for your pet is one that lists real meat as the first ingredient.

Truth: Some manufacturers also make unsubstantiated claims about ingredients and manipulate their own ingredient lists. For example, some dry food manufacturers tout real chicken, fish or beef as their first ingredient because the food contains more of this ingredient by weight than any other ingredient. What they don't say is that "real meat" is mostly water weight, which is removed when the food is made, moving it way down the ingredient list. They also neglect to mention that the technical term for "real meat" is mechanically deboned meat, also known as "white slime!"

Myth 3: The order of the ingredients is the most important factor in selecting your pet's diet.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size

Amount Per Serving

Calories

% Daily Values*

Meat. Muscle tissue that may or may not include fat and portions of the skin, sinew, nerve and blood vessels.

Meat byproducts. Most of the parts of the animal other than the muscle tissue, including familiar parts such as livers, kidneys and tripe, but also udders and lungs.

Poultry. The parts of the bird you would find if you purchased a whole chicken or turkey at the grocery store. This likely includes backs and necks and may include bone, which can serve as a source of calcium.

Poultry byproducts. This includes most of the parts that are not included in a dressed bird such as the heart, gizzard and liver, but also other internal organs, heads and feet.

Meat meal. This is a product made from mammal tissues that have been subject to cooking to destroy any harmful bacteria and to remove most of the water and fat, leaving primarily protein and minerals. Meal products are ground to form uniform sized particles.

Meat and Bone Meal. Similar to meat meal, but contains added bone.

Animal Byproduct Meal. Similar to meat meal and meat and bone meal, but may include additional byproducts.

Poultry Byproduct Meal. Essentially the same as "poultry byproducts," but in rendered form.

Poultry Meal. Rendered part of the whole carcass and skin with or without accompanying bone.

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We're on the Web!

Truth: Another trick some manufacturers play is called ingredient splitting, where they will list different carbohydrates separately—corn, rice, barley, wheat or oatmeal, for example—or list out different forms of the same carbohydrate, such as ground wheat and wheat flour, so these individual carbs appear lower in the ingredient list. Doing so makes it appear as if carbohydrates are not the first ingredient.

Fact: Your veterinarian chooses your pet's food based on your pet's physical exam, lifestyle, medical condition and other factors related to your pet's health. So before you reach for the food you heard about on a commercial, call your veterinary team first for a recommendation tailored to your pet.

5 Reasons Why Pet Obesity Is a Serious Problem

Today's dogs and cats are living longer than ever before. Unfortunately, they're also heavier than ever and have more costly chronic diseases. The good news is that many pet illnesses can be prevented. The bad news is that once a pet develops one of these long-term conditions such as arthritis or diabetes, there's often no cure. I'm pushing for a new era of veterinary medicine focused on preventing diseases rather than simply treating them. When it comes to preventing disease and helping your pet live a long, healthy, pain-free life, there is perhaps nothing more important than what and how much you feed them. Trouble is, we're feeding too much. Way too much.

Over 55% of all US dogs and cats are estimated to be overweight or obese according to the latest study from the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention. Flabby felines and portly pooches are the new normal. Heavier pets are prone to a torrent of weight-related disorders. If your pet needs to shed a few pounds, consider these serious consequences of obesity as you're looking for motivation.

Decreased Life Expectancy

Less is more when it comes to feeding pets and living longer. Eating less has been proven to extend life expectancy and reduce suffering in species as diverse as worms, spiders, water fleas, fruit flies, fish, hamsters, mice, rats, dogs, and monkeys. In a 1999 longevity study conducted on dogs, researchers found dogs fed 25% fewer calories than normal lived an average of two years longer. Even more exciting was that the dogs fed a little less food had a lot fewer medical problems. The study dogs also required fewer medications and remained more active well into "old age." If you're looking for the Fountain of Youth for your pets, it's right there in the food bowl.

Arthritis

The number one medical condition associated with excess weight is osteoarthritis (OA). Both large and small breeds of



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dogs are typically affected but cats are developing crippling arthritis at alarming rates. A March 2011 study concluded that the majority of cats (61%) had radiographic evidence of OA. Interestingly, few owners recognized the signs of arthritis, leading the study authors to strongly advise radiographs in older cats, especially those demonstrating inappropriate elimination or household

"accidents." If your pet is carrying as little as one or two extra pounds, remember those pounds are stressing tiny joints not designed to carry extra weight. Making matters worse, fat cells produce harmful chemicals known as adipocytokines that damage even non-weight bearing joints. There is no cure for arthritis; we can only minimize the pain.

Diabetes

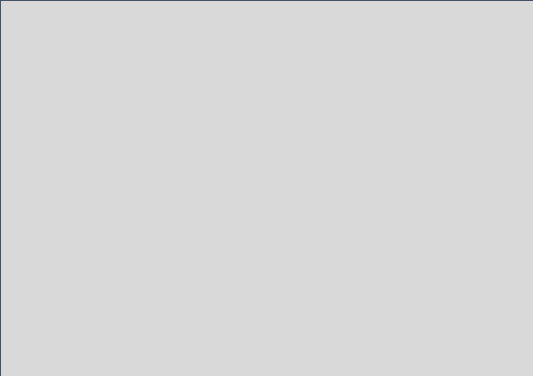
Veterinarians are increasingly diagnosing overweight cats with type 2 diabetes. Similar to humans, chubby cats are at tremendous risk for developing high blood sugar and diabetes requiring twice daily insulin injections. Obese dogs are more prone to a condition known as insulin resistance, a state in which they have dangerously high insulin and blood sugar levels. Both diabetes and insulin resistance have been shown to reduce a pet's life expectancy in addition to requiring constant medication and treatment. Type 2 diabetes is largely prevented by simply feeding the amount of food to maintain a normal weight. What could be easier?

High Blood Pressure

Sometimes we forget our pets get many of the same diseases we do. Hypertension is one of these commonly overlooked conditions in pets. High blood pressure is known as the "silent killer" because you can't tell if your pet has it nor can you see the damage it's causing – until it's too late. If your dog or cat has packed on a few extra pounds, have its blood pressure checked by your vet. This simple test can help prevent sudden blindness, heart problems and kidney failure. Treatment is as simple as changing to a low-sodium diet, weight loss, increasing exercise, and medications in more serious cases.

Cancer

Excess fat has been implicated in the formation of many cancers in animals. The National Cancer Institute estimates that obesity and physical inactivity may account for 25% to 30% of the major cancers in humans: colon, breast cancer in postmenopausal women, endometrial, kidney, and cancer of the esophagus. New research points to obesity-related insulin resistance as a likely cause. While we don't have as many dog and cat research studies to draw upon, the consensus is that excess weight increases a pet's risk of developing many types of cancer. Reduce the weight to reduce the risk.



The trouble with being plump isn't simply vanity; excess weight causes or worsens many serious medical conditions in our pets. Our animal companions depend on us to make good choices for them. Make sure you're feeding your pet based on sound nutritional advice and not due to clever marketing or price. Talk with your vet about specific strategies to keep your pet at a healthy weight. Your pets will be happier, have fewer medical problems, and you'll enjoy more years together.