



February newsletter

Obesity

Obese pets

Obesity is a condition that can be defined as an excess of body fat that is enough to impair health, welfare and quality of life.

Obese pets have a reduced quality of life. They are less willing to play and exercise, and many go on to develop medical conditions linked to their weight.

The House Vet is committed to raising awareness of the rising problem of pet obesity for the benefit of our pets and their owners. We are also committed to providing pet owners with the information you need to help your pets stay a healthy shape and weight.

What causes obesity?

Although some diseases can cause obesity, the main reason that pets become obese is because the food they eat contains more energy than they can use up. This means that if pets eat too much or do not do enough exercise, they may become obese!

Obesity can not only cause very serious health and welfare problems but can also make existing problems worse. As a result it can reduce both length and quality of a pet's life.

A few examples of the health problems that obesity can cause are:

- Diabetes mellitus
- Orthopaedic disease
- Heart disease
- Respiratory distress
- High blood pressure
- Skin disease
- Cancers

Ideal weight



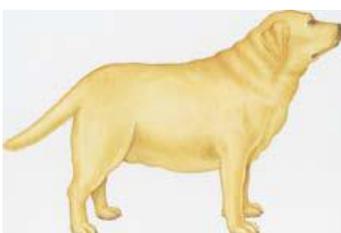
- Can feel ribs, backbone and hip bones; but not prominent
- Smooth, curved, tucked-in waist
- Base of tail smooth

Overweight

- No waist and back broader
- Ribs, backbone and hipbones difficult to feel



Obese



- Bulging pot belly
- Cannot feel ribs, backbone and hipbones
- Thick fatty pads at base of tail

Diet

It's best to stick to a commercial pet food as recommended by your vet. Home-made diets are an option, but it's difficult to make sure these contain the right amount and types of nutrients for pets.

Avoid excessive treats. It is always nice to reward our pets with a treat or special meal, but be aware that treats often have many more calories than regular diet, so excessive treating can sometimes double your pets daily calorie intake!

Exercise

There are lots of ways to exercise pets besides walking. Dogs enjoy running and playing games like 'fetch' so mix things up and vary the types of exercise.

House cats definitely need an exercise plan as it is all too easy for them to get into a routine of eating, napping and little else in between. Ideally set time aside to play with house cats regularly to ensure they get enough exercise and encourage them to 'work' for their food, using toys that release food when pushed around. Outdoor cats should get plenty of exercise when out and about, but this is not always the case, so owners should encourage them to exercise through play. The best toys are those that encourage chasing and pouncing.

First Aid

When your pet has an accident at home it can be a very stressful experience. Having a few essentials in the house to help deal with eventualities makes a stressful time easier. Most incidents at home are associated with cuts, burns or allergic reactions. Listed below are the things to keep in a first aid kit so you are able to act swiftly either independently or under veterinary advice over the phone in order to provide immediate emergency care:

- Melolin non-adhesive dressings
- Soft conforming bandage (e.g. Soffban)
- Elastic cohesive bandage (e.g. Vetwrap)
- Hibiscrub/sterile saline pouches for wound cleaning
- Cotton wool
- Micropore
- Tweezers
- Tick remover
- Piriton (under veterinary advice)

Keep your pet's kit fully stocked. Make sure all responsible household members know where the first aid kit is.

If you would like guidance on any first aid please ask as we will be more than happy to help.



The lovely Jessie is looking for a new home. Sadly due to illness her current family are unable to keep Jessie. She is a beautiful, lovable whippet x lurcher. At only 23" to the shoulder she is quite small but has a very big heart. She has lived with 3 other dogs (all boys) and gets on well with the other hounds in her foster family but does like to be boss in a motherly way. She has lived with older children happily but it is unknown what she is like with little kids and for this reason SLR are

looking for a home for her with kids over 12 years. **IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO READ MORE ABOUT THE LOVELY JESSIE PLEASE** go to: www.southernlurcherrescue.org.uk and click on hounds needing homes.