



The **F**-word



There is a 1 in 3 chance your dog or cat is overweight! Alarming no doubt. Excess weight is harmful to your pet's health. It will make your companion prone to various diseases and reduce their life expectancy by at least 2 years – according to the latest studies!

Body condition scoring is an easy tool to use to decide whether your pet is in shape or not.

Do this test:

1	20% below ideal body weight Ribs easily felt with no fat cover	
2	10% below ideal body weight Bones raised with minimal tissue between the skin and bone	
3	Ideal body weight Ribs can be felt through slight fat cover	
4	10% above ideal body weight Difficult to feel ribs through moderate fat cover. A slightly sagging abdominal fat pad may be seen in cats	
5	20% above ideal body weight Ribs are difficult to feel under thick fat. Cats have a prominent sagging abdominal fat pad	

1 + 2: Your pet is very underweight-make an appointment with a doctor so we can help you find the cause and a solution.

3: Congratulations! Your pet is at their ideal weight. Keep up the good work!

4 + 5: Your pet is overweight. It is equivalent to a man that normally weighs 75kg, now weighing 105kg. Contact our Pet Weight loss Clinic today and get your first bag of food free!

I bet you've wondered how the kg's gradually creep up on them?! The answer is the same way as in humans: excessive calorie intake and insufficient expenditure. Some breeds are prone to weight gain, but the truth is, an unbalanced diet is the root of all evil!

So, as we explained, there are health risks associated with excess weight:

- Overweight pets live **shorter lives**
- The fatter they are, the less they exercise, the fatter they get
- The risk of **heart conditions** and **respiratory diseases** increases
- Your pet becomes a **surgical and anaesthetic risk**
- Overweight pets are prone to developing diabetes
- The occurrence of tumours increases

I am sure you are extremely concerned now, but what can you do?

Make an appointment with one of the nurses at our clinic. They will share their secrets on weight loss with you.

In the meantime, here are a few keys to weight loss:

- **Stay dedicated and motivated:** You control their food intake and exercise levels.
- **Diet:** Your pet's usual diet needs to be replaced with a low calorie diet. Feeding less of the usual diet will cut down on the essential nutrients your pet needs and leads to deficiencies. It will also make your pet feel hungry. The latest in pet diet technology helped develop foods that change the gene expression of your overweight pet. Ingredients that change fat storer pets into fat burner pets have been researched and added to the reduced calorie diets. Sounds exciting, doesn't it?
- **Exercise** needs to be introduced gradually. Remember, your pet is unfit.

Your pet often looks at you with longing eyes, begging for food or a treat – we know! We have some ideas to nip this habit in the bud!

- **Split daily rations** into multiple meals, saving enough for frequent portions when you are at home.
- **Treat with the right treat!** Switch to low calorie alternatives such as mini carrots, rice cakes, apple or cucumber slices or even dry toast. Low calorie dog treats are also available from different pet food suppliers.
- **Never reward begging** or crying for food. Put your dog outside whenever an activity triggers begging behaviour, for example when you are cooking or eating.

Maybe we have left you a little out of breath. Make an appointment with one of our Doctors and our slimming team will assist you through the program and motivate you on every visit. Who knows, you could stand a chance to win the Pet Slimmer of the Year award!

----- **Happy Calorie counting!** -----