

Guide to Help with Weight Loss

It is important to assess the shape of your pet when considering weight loss rather than just the bodyweight, as even within a single breed, there can be a big variation in size and frame. A vet or veterinary nurse will be able to help you to assess your pet's shape if you are not sure.

An ideal body shape would include:

- A tuck in at the waist when looking from above
- A tuck up in the abdomen when looking from the side
- Ribs should be easily palpable, with minimal fat coverage



There are many ways to help reduce your pet's bodyweight. It helps to ensure that all family members and anyone looking after your pet follows these guidelines.

What shall I feed my pet?

Consider a lower calorie dog food that is aimed at achieving weight loss, or reducing the volume of their current food.

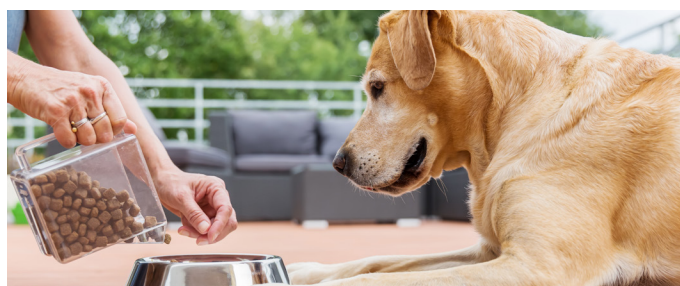
Ensure that your pet is receiving a 'complete' diet. This will ensure that they are being provided with everything that they need.

How much shall I feed my pet?

Have a look on the packet – there should be a table with 'recommended feeding guidelines'. These are only guidelines and will depend on the weight and activity level of your pet. Start at the lower end of the scale.

Accurately weigh out your pet's food using weighing scales rather than using a cup (which can be less accurate).

It helps to make a note of your pet's current weight and volume of food being fed on a calendar.



When should I feed my pet?

Split your pet's daily recommended food requirement into the number of meals you wish to feed.

Feeding smaller meals more frequently can reduce hunger. If your pet is used to getting table scraps, it can help to feed them their diet at your mealtimes e.g. splitting their requirement into breakfast, lunch and dinner portions. Or to discourage 'begging' you can separate them whilst you are eating.

It can help to separate your pet when feeding young children.

Can I give my dog a treat?

It is best not to give any treats, human foods and dental chews when trying to achieve weight loss. However, if you wish to reward/train your pet, you can use a piece of their own low calorie diet.

Ensure that any food given as a reward is taken from their daily allowance and is not in addition to this.

If family members struggle, you can provide them with a portion of your pet's food to use as treats.

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Monitoring weight loss progress:

Please weigh your pet every 2 weeks to monitor weight loss. This can be done at your local vets or on the scales at home (if you are able to hold your pet in your arms).

- Aim for a 1% loss in your pet's bodyweight every 2 weeks. Keep a record of your pet's weight on the calendar.
- If weight loss has not been achieved or the bodyweight remains static, please reduce the volume of food being given by 10% and make a note of this on the calendar.
- Re-weigh your pet every 2 weeks to continue to monitor bodyweight and reduce the food quantity accordingly.



Exercise

Exercise can help with weight loss. If suitable, consider gradually increasing your pet's level of exercise.

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