

This is a free nurse run clinic. We will work out the ideal weight for your pet and advise you how this can be achieved. In all cases this will be through a combination of diet, exercise and time.

You will also receive a **weight record chart** to note the progress of your pet's weight loss at each fortnightly visit.

Remember weight loss needs to be gradual to be effective and it can take up to a year to achieve your targets depending on how much weight loss is needed. So don't lose heart.

Problems obesity causes:

- It reduces your pet's enjoyment of life.
- It reduces an owner's enjoyment of their pet.
- It shortens life span.
- It causes cardio-vascular disease.
 - joint problems
 - diabetes
 - liver disease
 - skin disease
 - digestive upsets
 - breathing difficulties



PARK ISSA VETS

CLIENT FACT SHEET

IS MY PET OVERWEIGHT?

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eight. In the UK
overweight.

Another term for being overweight is *obesity*.

How can I tell whether my pet is overweight?

- Compare it with the norm for the breed.
- Check whether the ribs can be felt.
- Compare its shape with old photographs. Fit dogs have a level or tucked abdomen, fat dogs have pendulous abdomens.
- Look for other signs of obesity such as exercise or heat intolerance. Fit dogs are always keen to exercise, fat dogs are often reluctant to go for walks in bad weather.

Why is it easy to overfeed pets?

- Pets are fed the same amount despite needing less e.g. they've stopped growing or have less exercise.
- Just because your pet looks for food doesn't always mean he's hungry.
- People like to see him enjoying his food.
- Very few pets get enough regular exercise.
- It is easy to forget to take calories from treats into account.
- Giving pets a treat whenever it begs or indulges in cute behaviour.

What should I do if I think my pet is overweight?

Easy, seek professional help. Often owners try to sort the problem out themselves with home-made diets but these are usually unbalanced, can leave the animal feeling very empty (hunger misery) and not uncommonly can actually lead to excess calorie intake as its impossible to assess the nutritional value of the food.

Feeding a prepared low calorie diet avoids these problems and is also a great deal easier as there is no time lost in preparation.

We are here to help. Here are some tips to start:

- Take a before+photograph to use as a comparison.
- Set goals. Start by getting your pet weighed at the surgery on accurate scales.
- Eliminate all titbits.
- Get a smaller feed bowl.
- Change the diet, don't just feed less of the same. We stock a full range of calorie control diets both dried complete and canned.
- Feed smaller regular meals throughout the day.
- Keep pets out of the kitchen.
- See our *pet health councillors* and join our **Weigh-in club**.