



HOW TO HELP YOUR DOG and CAT LOSE WEIGHT !

There is no "one size fits all" weight loss strategy for pets (or for people). Start with the basics listed below and then experiment if necessary. PLEASE stop killing your pet with kindness ! We know very well the hazards of making poor dietary choices in people. **But your pet doesn't have a choice ~ they will eat what you give them.** So, for their benefit, choose wisely. They will be healthier and happier, and live longer and better lives.

- Feed her / him for their IDEAL / Target body weight ... NOT their current, overweight body weight. What does this mean ? If you have a 35 lb dog that should weigh ~25 lbs, you need to look at the bag of dog food you are feeding and see what the recommendation is for a 25 lb dog ... then feed that amount. The caloric density of every food is different. Expect to feed a smaller amount of a high quality food than a lower quality food. Portion control is crucial !
- Bags or cans of food will often give a range of how much to feed (ex. 1 1/2 to 2 cups / day). It's always best to feed the lower amount listed.
- If you cannot determine the correct amount to feed your dog or cat, use these formulas to help calculate the proper amount to feed. Remember to feed for the IDEAL or TARGET weight ... not what they weigh right now !

DAILY CALORIES for DOGS: (TARGET Body weight in kg X 30) + 70 Ex. A 38 lb dog that should weigh 30 lbs:
 $30 \text{ lbs} \div 2.2 = 13.6 \text{ kg} \dots 13.6 \times 30 = 409 \dots 409 + 70 = \mathbf{479 \text{ calories TOTAL per day !}}$

DAILY CALORIES for CATS: (TARGET Body Weight in kg X 30) + 70 x 0.8 Ex. A 15 lb cat that should be 12 lbs
 $12 \text{ lbs} \div 2.2 = 5.5 \text{ kg} \dots 5.5 \times 30 = 165 \dots 165 + 70 = 235 \dots 235 \times 0.8 = \mathbf{188 \text{ calories TOTAL per day !}}$

- The recommended quantity to feed is the recommended TOTAL per day. This total amount recommended assumes you are not feeding anything else !!! However, if you're going to give treats or 'table food' (see my advice below), then you've got to sacrifice calories someplace else, even if it means that you give less kibble.
- **CAT ALERT !!! FACT:** We now know that DRY CAT FOODS are THE main reason for obesity in cats ! Why? DRY cat food is too high in carbohydrates. Cats are carnivores and require a high protein diet. The high carb content of dry cat food is making many cats fat, and putting many at risk of becoming diabetic. I STRONGLY advise all cat owners with overweight cats to start feeding wet / canned cat food. Canned food is not as cheap or convenient as dry food, but your cat's health matters enough to switch to canned food (... or at least, start mixing canned food together with dry). Believe me, it's far easier to do this than to treat a diabetic cat !
- There is a difference between an 'even' cup of food and a rounded, heaping cup of food. If you give a 'heaping' cup of food, then you may be adding ~4 to 10 extra pieces of kibble above the recommended amount. Over the course of a year, that's an extra 1500 to 3500 pieces of kibble per year ! That's a lot of unwanted calories and unnecessary weight gain.
- With dogs, get rid of the MilkBone-type treats ! Period !!! First, they DO NOT HELP KEEP TEETH CLEAN ! Worse, they add a lot of unwanted calories + have no nutritional value at all ! Likewise, trash the Pupperonis, LiverSnaps and other overly-processed, high calorie bombs that come in a box or bag ! C'mon ~ get rid of them ~ Now !
- I know what you're thinking now ... You want to give your dog some treats because they expect them. That's fine. I give them to my dogs every day. So what do I give ??? Raw or cooked veggies ! Carrots ... broccoli ... green beans ... zucchini ... cherry tomatoes ... just try something. What will they like ? Beats me. But experiment and find some veggie that they'll like.
- What about giving fruits ? Focus on giving vegetables rather than fruit. And NEVER give grapes or raisins since they can be very poisonous ... and deadly ... to some dogs.
- Too many pet owners get hung up on giving "table food". We all know in our heart of hearts that there is "good" table food ... and "bad" table food. You know the difference. If you know that something is bad for you (French fries, pizza, ice cream, etc), don't give it to your dog. If you know something is good for you (baked chicken ... baked salmon ... vegetables), then feel free to give it to your four-legged friend. But remember: those calories matter, too !
- It should go without saying that activity and exercise are necessary ... not only for burning calories, but also for boosting the body's metabolism (ability to use and burn calories) as well as maintaining joint health, mobility and flexibility.
- Also, different diets work for different pets in different ways ... just like people. You may have to experiment and be dedicated and disciplined to trying something consistently for a minimum of 3-4 months. But don't starve your pet into weight loss ~ let's be sensible and give it time. It took months to years to get overweight ... be patient when losing weight.
- Oftentimes, the most difficult part of trying to get your pet to lose weight are other family members who refuse to get involved ... or keep giving treats. You may have to have 'the talk' to get them on board with the weight loss plan.
- There are factors beyond diet and exercise that can be responsible for weight gain. If you and your family have dedicated ~3-4 months to diet and exercise, but you still aren't having any success, then it could be a result of either being Spayed (females) or Neutered (Males). We highly recommend HPM SPAY-NEUTER Diet for both Dogs and Cats this is a High Protein + High Fiber + Low Carbohydrate diet that addresses weight gain due to being fixed.

Hill's METABOLIC Diet is a proven diet for weight loss that I also strongly recommend that you try.

In dogs, we see Thyroid deficiencies (hypothyroidism) in middle-aged to older dogs, which can be responsible for unwanted weight gain. They can be tested with a blood sample at a full-service veterinary clinic to see if they have the condition. If your dog has a thyroid deficiency, there is medication (twice daily pills) that can manage the problem.

We rarely see hypothyroidism in cats.

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