



Aireworth Vets 
SMALL ANIMAL  

Weight Management



If you have any further queries regarding the welfare of your pet, please do not hesitate to ask a member of staff

We are happy to assist!



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Why is weight control important?

The food your pet eats plays an important part in his or her overall health and well-being. Unfortunately many pets are not at their ideal weight, in fact surveys show that around 50% of dogs and cats are overweight to some degree.

Weight is a good indicator of the health of a pet. Underweight pets are probably not getting sufficient energy either because of a poor diet or an underlying cause. On the other hand eating too much food, an unhealthy diet and insufficient exercise will all cause your pet to become overweight. Overweight pets are at risk of a whole range of clinical problems, the top five being:

- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Skin complaints
- Breathing difficulties
- Arthritis

So how do you know if your pet's overweight?



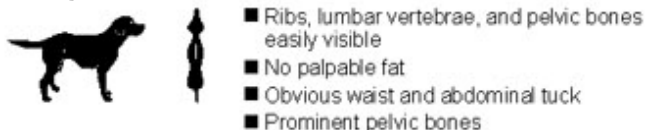
The number of overweight pets is rising

All pets have an ideal weight for their size and breed and there are a number of signs that may indicate if your pet is overweight, some of the signs you may notice include:

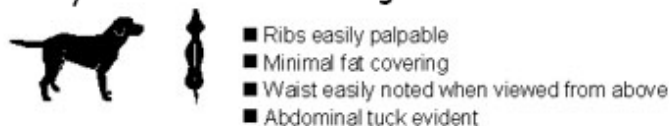
- Ribs are difficult to feel.
- Loss of an obvious waist.
- Collar needs loosening.
- Sleeping more than usual.
- Difficulty in walking.
- Slow movement.
- Shortness of breath.
- Bad temperament.

Here at Aireworth Vets we assess your pet with a Body Condition Score. This helps indicate if your pet is below, at, or above its ideal weight. Check the chart below and see how your pet scores.

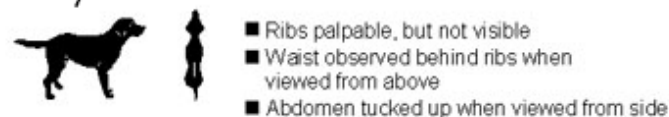
Body Score 1 - Emaciated



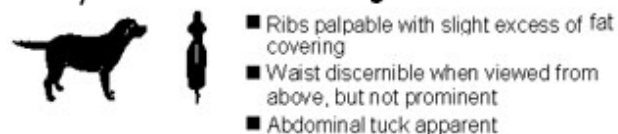
Body Score 2 - Underweight



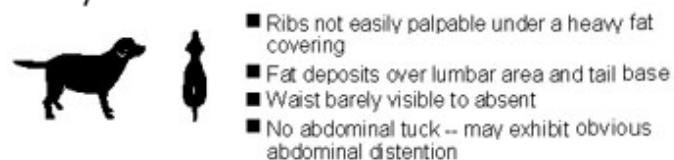
Body Score 3 - Ideal



Body Score 4 - Overweight



Body Score 5 - Obese



What can we do to help your pet?

The first thing we advise at Aireworth Vets is to bring your pet to the surgery for a free weight check and talk to one of our nurses about what regimes are available for your pet to help shed that excess weight. Some things available to you are:

- Pet slimming programme.
- Advise on exercise and feeding techniques.
- Regular weight checks and contact with your practice.
- Reduced calorie food, proven to maintain a strong immune system whilst safely and effectively helping your pet lose weight.

The most successful way to manage your pets weight is through changes in diet and lifestyle. Combining a change in diet with increased exercise is the most effective way of achieving a healthy weight.

Exercise tips for cats:

- Encourage your cat to follow you when you move from room to room, particularly up and down stairs.
- Use toys to encourage your cat to play, or hide food and make your pet hunt for the food.
- Shine a torch on walls for your cat to chase.

Exercise tips for dogs:

- Enjoy regular walks with your dog, walking at a constant pace will help.
- Take your dog for walks on different surfaces, such as sand or in water, this provides extra resistance.
- Encourage play in the garden and in the home.

If you would like to know more please contact the practice and we will be happy to help.