

Weight Management

While your pet doesn't need to worry about looking good in a bathing suit, maintaining the right weight has an important impact on his or her overall health. According to the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention, an estimated 93 million cats and dogs in the US are overweight or obese.

Health risks associated with being overweight include type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart and respiratory disease, osteoarthritis, hypothyroidism, and decreased life expectancy of up to 2.5 years.

Here's an overview of what to be on the lookout for with your pet's body weight:



Very thin

Ribs: Easily felt with no fat cover

Tail Base: bones are raised with no tissue between the skin and bone

Side View: Severe abdominal tuck

Overhead View: Accentuated hourglass shape



Underweight

Ribs: Easily felt with little fat cover

Tail Base: Bones are raised with minimal tissue between the skin and bone

Side View: Abdominal tuck

Overhead View: Marked hourglass shape



Ideal

Ribs: Easily felt with slight fat cover

Tail Base: Smooth contour but bones can be felt under a thin layer of fat

Side View: Abdominal tuck

Overhead View: Well-proportioned lumbar waist



Overweight

Ribs: Difficult to feel with moderate fat cover

Tail Base: Some thickening but bones can be felt under moderate layer of fat

Side View: No abdominal tuck or waist

Overhead View: Back is slightly broadened



Obese

Ribs: Difficult to feel under thick fat cover

Tail Base: Thickened and difficult to feel under a prominent layer of fat

Side View: Fat hangs from the abdomen and there is no waist

Overhead View: Markedly broadened