



Groupe Vétérinaire MONVET Inc.

CANINE WEIGHT LOSS GUIDE



WEIGHT LOSS

Caloric needs

Like people, dogs need fuel to go about their daily activities (e.g.: sleeping, walking, running, playing, etc). This fuel refers to the calories present in their food.

Caloric needs vary from one dog to another depending on their weight, height, body build and level of physical activity during the day. When the amount of calories ingested by the pet equals the amount spent, his weight stays the same.

What is obesity?

Obesity is an excess weight due to an increase in adipose tissue (fat). This accumulation of fat occurs when the animal consumes more calories than he spends.

A dog is considered to be obese when he weighs more than 15%-20% than his ideal body weight. In comparison, a 3 lbs excess in a dog is equal to a 30 lbs excess in a human. Today, it is estimated that about 25% of dogs are obese.

Why are so many dogs obese?

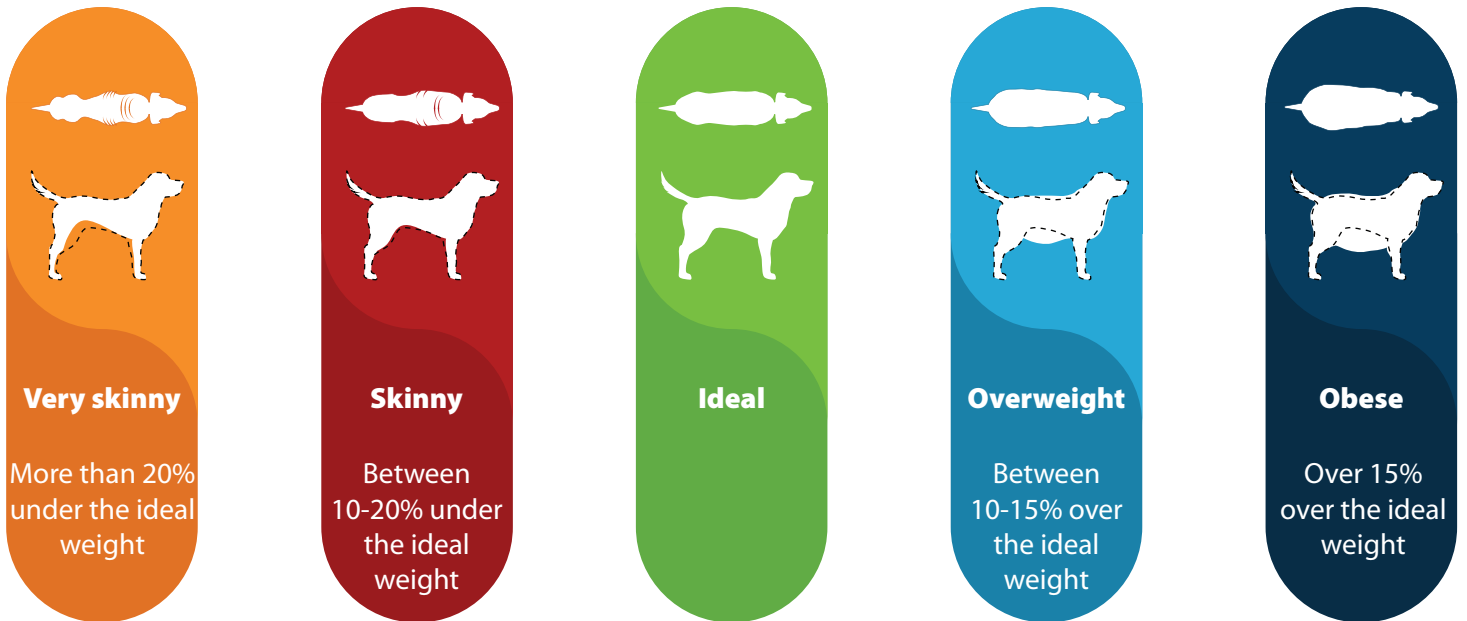
First, obese dogs eat too much and, second, they do not exercise enough. Indeed, dogs are often over-fed: in addition to their regular food, they frequently eat large quantities of highly caloric treats, as well as table scraps or other "human food" (e.g.: peanut butter, cheese, etc.), which are sources of extra calories.

Furthermore, many dogs, especially small breed dogs, only "exercise" when they go outside to relieve themselves. Sometimes, they aren't even sent out, but do it on « pee pads » instead. Thus, these dogs do not exercise at all.



Figure 1. Various dog breeds' approximate daily caloric needs at rest.

WEIGHT LOSS



Considering that the number of calories a dog consumes every day as "treats" should not exceed 10% of his daily caloric needs, it is easy to see that this limit is reached quickly, especially in small dogs.

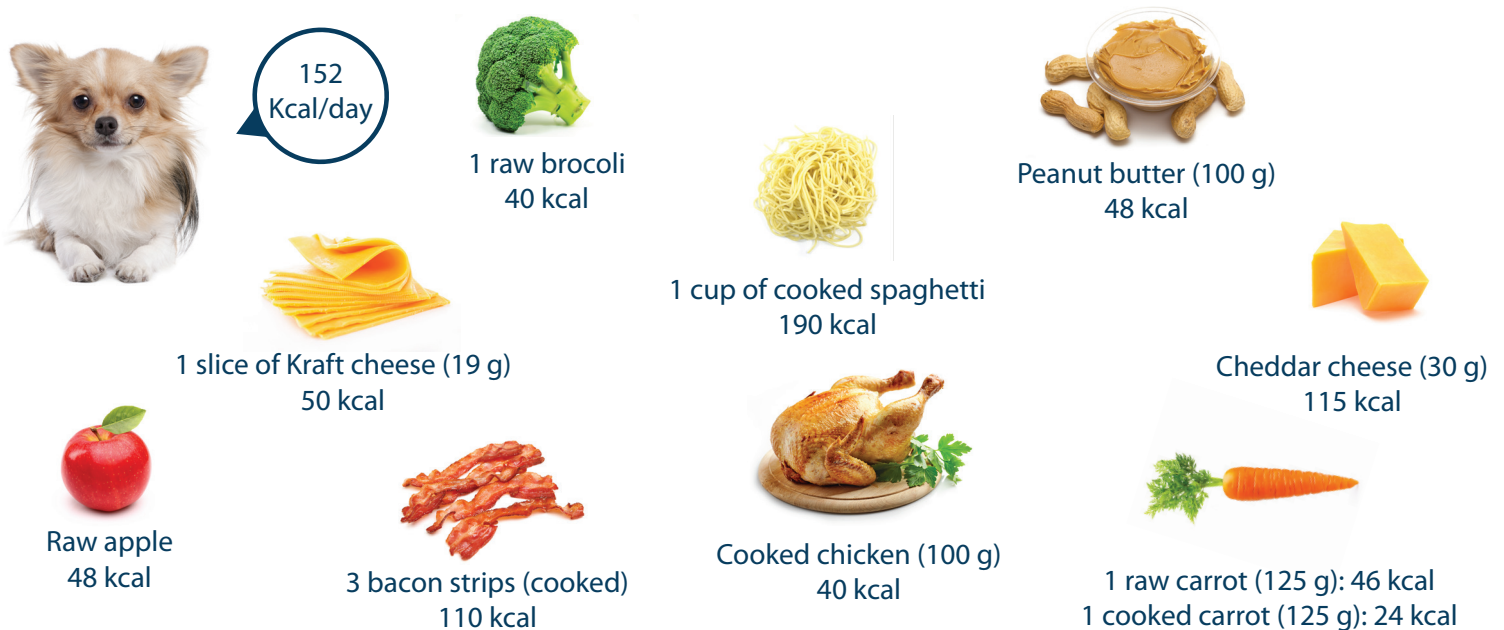


Figure 2. Number of calories per 100 g (approximately 1/4 lb) of treats enjoyed by dogs.

WEIGHT LOSS

Obesity: More than just an esthetic issue!

The WHO (World Health Organization) recognizes obesity as being a disease since 1997.

We now know that obesity can be detrimental to dogs' health, just like that of humans'. In fact, obesity increases their risk of developing other diseases, which also can have a negative impact on their quality of life and life expectancy.



WEIGHT LOSS

Losing weight

To lose weight, dogs need to burn off more calories than they consume. Thus, they should exercise more and not eat too much.

$$\text{WEIGHT LOSS} = \text{CALORIES SPENT} > \text{CALORIES INGESTED}$$

Exercise

Exercising is good for dogs' physical health: it promotes a healthy weight loss by reducing their amount of body fat and by developing their muscle mass. In addition, exercising is good for the soul.

Your dog can exercise in many different ways, either by himself or with you, by:

- walking outside;
- playing Frisbee, ball, etc.;
- looking for treats hidden all over the house;
- swimming;
- doing Cani-cross;
- using an interactive feeder to eat.



Swimming: 422 kcal/hour
(70 kg human)



Running: 457 kcal/hour
(70 kg human)



Playing frisbee: 211 kcal/hour
(70 kg human)

NUTRITION

Food

There are two types of dog food on the market intended for weight management: light and weight reduction. Light foods are designed to maintain weight. They are available wherever pet food is sold. Weight reduction diets, on the other hand, are indicated for weight loss and are sold solely in veterinary clinics.

It is ESSENTIAL that a dog's weight loss program be supervised by a veterinarian. Otherwise, weight loss diets can be dangerous for his health.

Before starting the diet, the pet should be examined to determine:

- if he gained too much weight because he eats too much or because he suffers from a disease that makes him gain weight;
- if he is healthy and therefore can eat the weight loss food safely;
- his caloric needs, using proven mathematical formulas, that take into account his build, size, lifestyle and the amount of daily exercise he does;
- the ideal weight that he needs to reach;
- the exact amount of food he should eat each day.



Light foods should not be used to make dogs lose weight, because if the portions of these types of food are reduced too much, it can lead to nutritional deficiencies.

Weight reduction foods (e.g.: Hill's® Prescription Diet Metabolic®), however, are specially designed to make pets lose weight. In addition to controlling their appetite, these foods improve their metabolism and help them burn fat while preserving their muscle mass.

It is important to remember that dogs will continue to gain weight and/or not lose enough of it if they eat too much, even if what they eat is a weight reduction food.

Does your dog have to lose weight, but also need to eat a special food to control his allergies or prevent urinary problems from recurring?

Speak to his veterinarian. He or she can suggest a mixed diet that is both slimming and hypoallergenic, or slimming and protective of the urinary tract at the same time.



Treats

Good news! Your dog can still have treats while being on his weight loss program. However, you need to choose a good quality one that is tasty and low in calories.

Do not hesitate to ask an animal health technician for help in finding a treat adapted to your dog's needs. He or she can also determine precisely how much he's allowed to eat daily.

NUTRITION

Canned food

Many people think that canned food is more fattening than dry food. On the contrary! Not only are wet foods less caloric than dry foods, but the water present in canned foods takes up space in a dog's stomach, which satisfies his hunger faster than dry food would.

Interactive feeders

Interactive feeders are objects into which kibbles or treats can be placed. The goal for the dog is to figure out a way to retrieve and eat them. These feeders offer many benefits, both on a physical and mental level.

By using these interactive feeders to eat, dogs maintain and lose their extra weight more easily because they:

- move more;
- eat small quantities of food at a time, which prevents large amounts of sugar from accumulating in their blood at once and then be transformed into fat;
- eat more slowly, which promotes a better digestion and a feeling of fullness.



Interactive feeders also help with behavior. Indeed, they stimulate dogs' intellectual faculties, make them spend their extra energy (this way they have less of it to "cause trouble"), and help prevent bad behavior related to boredom (e.g.: aggression, nibbling on household objects and/or furniture, etc.).

A variety of models are available: bowls with partitions, holed cylinders that need to be pushed around for the food to come out, etc.

Pipolino®

Aikiou® Interactive dog feeder and slow dog feeder

Kong® Puppy, Regular and Senior size

Dogit® Go Slow! Anti-Gulping Dish

Omega Paw® Tricky Treat™ Ball

Be One Breed™ Food Distributor Toys



Memory aid

The following memory aid can help you help your dog maintain his ideal weight or optimize his weight loss:

- Has he exercised today?
- Did I weigh his food?
- Am I certain he's eating the correct amount of food?
- Did he use his interactive feeder to eat?



OUR WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM

How does it work?

First, we will give you a questionnaire with questions pertaining to your dog's diet and daily exercise routine.

When you are finished filling it out, an animal health technician will analyze the answers. Then, he or she will determine the type and amount of food you need to give to your dog, taking into account his weight, body score and amount of physical activities he should do every day. He or she will also establish a schedule to monitor his weight loss.

Medical follow-up

Dogs should lose between 1%-2% of their body weight each week.

A medical follow-up during this period is essential to:

- adjust the quantity of food, if your dog loses weight too fast or not fast enough;
- determine the right time to stop the weight loss diet and change to a maintenance diet;
- calculate the precise amount of food he needs to eat. Your pet should be weighed regularly for a few months after the end of the weight loss program to make sure he doesn't gain back the weight he lost.

Closing words

As you can see, this document is rich in information about the dangers of obesity and how important it is for your pet to lose excess weight and maintain his ideal weight afterwards.

We hope you take advantage of the tips and resources contained in this guide to help your companion lose weight safely and happily.



HEALTH RECORD

					
Weight (kg): _____	Weight (kg): _____	Weight (kg): _____	Weight (kg): _____	Weight (kg): _____	Weight (kg): _____
Date: _____	Date: _____	Date: _____	Date: _____	Date: _____	Date: _____

Weight (kg): _____	Weight (kg): _____	Weight (kg): _____	Weight (kg): _____	Weight (kg): _____	Weight (kg): _____
Date: _____	Date: _____	Date: _____	Date: _____	Date: _____	Date: _____
					

Pet's size chart

Where would you put your dog on this chart?



Weight and body score

- Pet's actual weight: _____
- Pet's target ideal weight: _____
- Body score: /9
- Muscular mass: ☐ Normal ☐ Slight loss ☐ Moderate loss ☐ Severe loss

NUTRITIONAL EVALUATION

Section to be completed by the owner

• Dog's name: _____ Breed: _____
• Age: _____ Neutered or not: _____ Date: _____

Nutrition

What type of food(s) does your dog eat?

- ☐ Kibbles. Which brand(s)? _____ How much per day? _____
☐ Moist. Which brand(s)? _____ How much per day? _____
☐ Home-cooked meals. _____ How much per day? _____
☐ Raw food. _____ How much per day? _____



Does he eat treats?

• What kind(s)? _____ How much per day? _____

Do you give him nutritional supplements (e.g. vitamins, glucosamine, fatty acids, etc.)?

• What kind(s)? _____ How much per day? _____



Exercises

Does your dog exercise? How often?

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| ☐ Many times a day | ☐ Once a day | ☐ 2-3 times a day | ☐ Once a week |
| ☐ Once a month | ☐ Occasionally | ☐ Never | |

How long does each exercise session last?

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| ☐ Less than 15 minutes | ☐ 15 - 30 minutes | ☐ 30 min - 1 hour | ☐ More than 1 hour |
| ☐ Variable | | | |

What exercise(s) does he practice?

- | | | | | |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ☐ Obstacle course | ☐ Swimming | ☐ Cani-cross | ☐ Walking | ☐ Running |
| ☐ Ball fetching | ☐ Interactive feeding toys | | | |

NUTRITIONAL EVALUATION

Section to be completed by the veterinarian or the animal health technician

Nutrition recommendations

Food

- Brand(s): _____
- Quantities per day: _____
Kibbles: _____ cup(s) or _____ gram(s)
Moist: _____ can(s) of _____ oz/g
- Number of meals per day: _____

Treats

- Brand(s): _____
- Quantities per day: _____

Interactive feeding toys

- Name(s): _____

Exercise recommendations

- Which one(s): _____
- Session(s) duration: _____
- Number of session(s) per day/week: _____

Follow-up recommendation

- Schedule an appointment with an animal health technician to have your dog weighed once a month.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____





Groupe Vétérinaire MONVET Inc.

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Certain services are not available for all animal species nor in all our locations.

Working together for animal health and wellbeing.



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