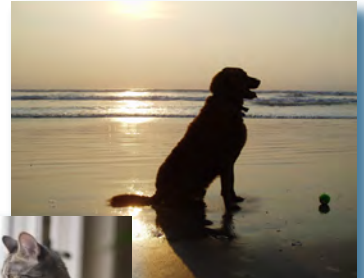


The Three R's of Successful Weight Management

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Recognize

At least one third of dogs and cats are overweight or obese.¹⁻² The extra pounds carried by pets are not simply a cosmetic concern, but a serious health problem that increases the risk of multiple disease conditions as well as reduces life expectancy.³⁻⁴ Because recognition of a problem is the first step towards resolution, education about overweightedness and obesity and the importance of keeping pets lean is vital to improving both the quality and lifespan of our beloved pets' lives. Beyond weighing a pet, determining a pet's body condition can be useful in establishing whether a weight loss plan is needed. Body condition charts have now been added to the packaging of every Natura dry food to provide guidance on what an appropriate body condition looks and feels like. If a pet is overweight then Natura offers some excellent options to achieve an ideal body condition.



Restrict

All successful weight loss plans start with the selection of an appropriate diet to feed during caloric restriction and active weight loss. EVO® Weight Management dog and cat dry foods provide an excellent option for those pets that need to shed a few pounds. EVO Weight Management foods are high in protein, making them ideal for achieving as well as maintaining a healthy body condition. Feeding a high protein diet has been shown to promote fat loss and to aid in maintaining lean body mass during weight loss in both dogs and cats.⁵⁻⁶ Protein has also been shown to improve satiety (the sensation of fullness) and increase energy expenditure in dogs and cats, thereby helping pets eat less and burn more calories.⁷⁻⁸ In addition to increased dietary protein, micronutrients should also be increased in weight loss foods.⁹ When restricted levels of typical maintenance foods are fed for weight loss, essential vitamins and minerals can become deficient. Therefore, all essential nutrients in EVO Weight Management foods have been safely Nutrient Enhanced™ to a minimum of 125%, allowing restriction of energy while still meeting important nutrient needs. L-carnitine, which is made from amino acids, has been shown to increase the rate of weight loss in cats, and is thought to promote the use of fat for energy rather than storage while sparing muscle mass.¹⁰⁻¹¹ For that reason, L-carnitine has been added to EVO Weight Management foods to give pets an additional edge to reach weight loss goals.



Restriction to 80% of daily maintenance caloric needs is a starting point for weight loss. Accurate calorie statements are included on all Natura labels to help pet parents easily determine the appropriate amount of food to feed all their pets whether overweight or not. The use of standard measuring cups, such as Natura's eight fluid ounce cups available at some independent retailers, also helps to ensure that the appropriate amount of food and calories are fed. Finally, for those pets that achieve their weight loss goals and/or need help keeping the weight off, Low Fat, Senior, and Weight Control foods available within the Innova®, California Natural® and HealthWise® brands are excellent options in addition to the EVO line of grain free, low carbohydrate foods.

Reassess

Continual monitoring and reassessment are essential for successful weight loss. Pets should be monitored on a biweekly basis to ensure that they are achieving healthy weight loss goals. A rate loss rate of 1-2% of body weight per week is appropriate, but achieving 0.5% per week should also be considered a success. Pet parents should enter into a weight loss plan with the understanding that adjustments in initial feeding amounts will likely be required, and that slow and steady progress will provide the healthiest and most sustainable result. As with any health decision, a pet's veterinarian should be consulted before undergoing a weight loss plan to ensure that the pet is overweight/obese and otherwise healthy.

		Underweight - Rib, spine and pelvic bones can be easily seen. Displays little abdominal fat.
		Ideal - Rib, spine and pelvic bones cannot be seen, but can be easily felt. Waist is highly defined. Belly curves up when viewed from the side.
		Overweight - Rib, spine and pelvic bones cannot be easily seen or felt. Waist is undefined. Belly is rounded when viewed from the side.

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