

WEIGHTY CONVERSATIONS & FELINE COMORBIDITIES MANAGEMENT

Ashlie Saffire DVM, Diplomate ABVP (Feline)



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Definition of a disease?

1. Has clinical signs
2. Causes impairment of normal function
3. Causes harm/morbidity
4. Progresses over time
5. Leads to chronic inflammation
6. Results in morbidity/mortality

disease noun

disease (dɪˈziːz)
Synonyms of disease >

1 : a condition of the living animal or plant body or of one of its parts that impairs normal functioning and is typically manifested by distinguishing signs and symptoms
: SICKNESS, MALADY
infectious diseases
a rare genetic disease
heart disease



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Examples of Feline Diseases:

- Chronic kidney disease
- Thyroid disease
- Dental disease
- Pancreatic disease
- Liver disease
- Orthopedic disease
- Urinary tract disease

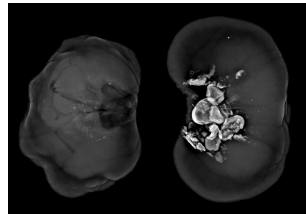


Photo Credit: Ashlie Saffire/Jody Lulich

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Is Obesity a disease? Yes.

- ✓Has clinical signs/appearance
- ✓Causes impairment of normal function
- ✓Progresses over time
- ✓Leads to chronic inflammation
 - Adipose leads to tissue necrosis
 - Secretion of pro-inflammatory mediators
 - Lipotoxicity (due to adipokines)
- ✓Causes morbidity/development of potentially fatal pathologies
- ✓Shortened lifespan



Teng, et al. Strong associations of nine-point body condition scoring with survival and lifespan in cats. JFMS. (2018)

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Pathologies associated with obesity

- Musculoskeletal disease (DJD, ligament injuries, lameness)
- Diabetes mellitus (type 2) & insulin resistance
- Urinary tract disease (urolithiasis, cystitis, CKD ?)
- Non-allergic skin disorders
- Ophthalmic disorders
- Pulmonary disease
- Heart disease/Hypertension
- Digestive system disease

Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery
Volume 25 Issue 7 July 2021 Pages 254-265
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https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfms.2021.102246

Clinical Review
Feline comorbidities: Pathophysiology and management of the obese diabetic cat
Melissa Clark^{1,2} and Margaretha Hennig²



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Pathologies associated with obesity

- Clark M, Moeenig M. Feline comorbidities: Pathophysiology and management of the obese diabetic cat. *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery*. 2023;23(7):639-648.
- Saavedra C, Pérez C, Oyarzún C, Torres-Arteaga A. Overweight and obesity in domestic cats: epidemiological risk factors and associated pathologies. *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery*. 2024;36(11).
- Bennett D, Zainal-Abidin SM, Johnston P. Osteoarthritis in the cat: 1. how common is it and how easy to recognize? *J Feline Med Surg* 2012; 14: 65-75.
- Frye CW, et al. Obesity, exercise and orthopedic disease. *Vet Clin North Am Small Anim Pract* 2016; 46: 833-843.
- Burggraaf NJ, et al. Analysis of 7866 feline and canine uroliths submitted between 2014 and 2020 in the Netherlands. *Research in veterinary science*. 2023; 94: 137-40-93.
- Gomes VD, Ariza PC, Borges NC, Schulz FJ, Fioravanti MC. Risk factors associated with feline urolithiasis. *Veterinary research communications*. 2018; 42: 87-94.
- Westropp JL, Stella JL, Buffington CT. Interstitial cystitis—an imbalance of risk and protective factors? *Frontiers in Pain Research*. 2024; May 3;5:1475488.
- Lund EM, Armstrong PJ, Kirk CK, et al. Prevalence and risk factors for obesity in adult cats from private US veterinary practices. *Intern J Appl Res Vet Med* 2005; 3: 38-50.
- Finn E, Freeman LM, Rush JE, et al. The relationship between body weight, body condition, and survival in cats with heart failure. *J Vet Intern Med* 2010; 24: 1369-7374.
- Caro-Vadillo A, Montoya-Alonso JA, García-Guascá L. Impact of obesity on lung function in cats with bronchoconstriction. *Vet Sci* 2023; 9.
- García-Guascá L, Caro-Vadillo A, Manubens-Grau J, et al. Pulmonary function in obese vs non-obese cats. *J Feline Med Surg* 2015; 17: 494-499.

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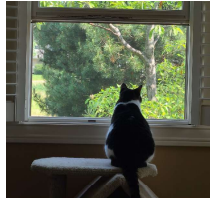
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"Obesity is something they have, NOT what they are" ~ Dr. Alex German

This cat isn't cancer, this cat HAS cancer



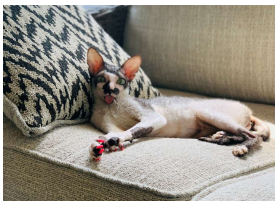
This cat isn't obese, it HAS obesity



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How does obesity develop?



Extrinsic epidemiologic factors¹

- ✓ **Sedentary lifestyle**
- ✓ **Low environmental stimulation**
 - Boredom and excess food intake
 - High stress/anxiety
- ✓ **Change in eating habits**
 - Carnivorous hunter now eats processed foods high in fat
 - Predominant dry diet (>75%) = 2.4 x more likely to be overweight than wet
 - Ad libitum diet
 - Excessive treats

1. Saavedra, et al. Overweight and obesity in domestic cats: Epidemiological risk factors and associated pathologies. *JFMS*. 2024

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How does obesity develop?



Intrinsic epidemiologic factors¹

- ✓ **Genetics**
- ✓ **Sex**
- ✓ **Neuter status**
 - Decreases energy requirements by 30%
 - Increases food intake
- ✓ **Breed risk**
 - DLH, DSH, Cross-breeds
 - British shorthairs
 - Maine Coons
 - Norwegian Forest Cats
- ✓ **Age (5-11 yrs)**

1. Saeedra, et al. Overweight and obesity in domestic cats: Epidemiological risk factors and associated pathologies. JFMS. 2024

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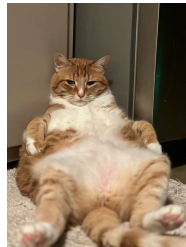
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"but he is so cute"



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Human factors

- ✓ Owners with approving attitudes towards obesity are strongly associated with ownership of obese cats
 - Obesity perceived as tender, cute
 - Being “chubby” = good QOL
- ✓ Underestimation of BCS
 - Owner is not aware the pet is obese

OPEN ACCESS

Positive attitudes towards feline obesity are strongly associated with ownership of obese cats

Published: June 25, 2025 • <https://doi.org/10.1101/2025.06.23.662410>



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Human factors

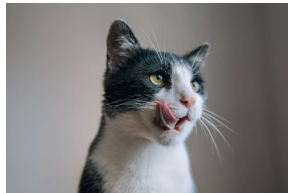
- ✓ **Overfeeding behaviors**
 - Caregiver misinterprets attention seeking behavior for "begging for food"
 - Behavior is rewarded with food
 - Cat is overfed
 - Caregiver misinterprets consumption of small amounts of food as "disinterest" in food and constantly rotates

OPEN ACCESS

Positive attitudes towards feline obesity are strongly associated with ownership of obese cats

Kandy T. Tong , Paul D. McGloren, Jenny Ann L. M. L. Sorbin, Naveed K. Dhand
Published: June 26, 2020 • <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0234180>

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Behavioral consideration: Cats are physiologically designed to consume very small amounts of food frequently throughout the day



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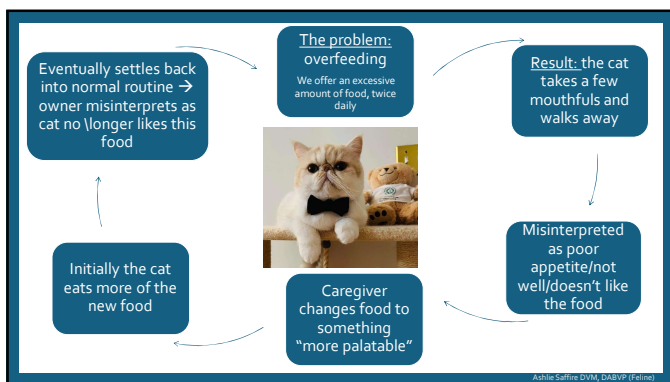
The problem:
overfeeding

We offer an excessive amount of food, twice daily



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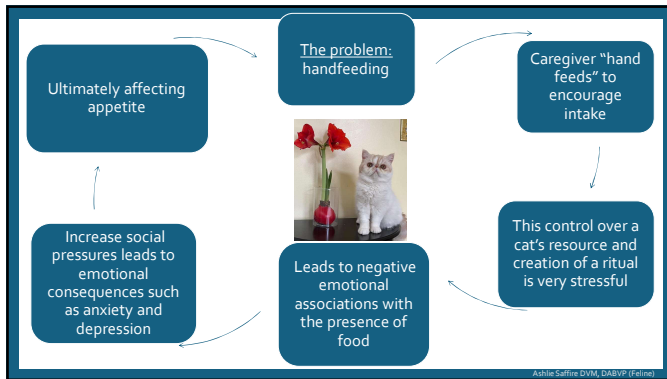
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The problem:
handfeeding



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Emotion-related obesity: stress at home

- ✓ Cats are solitary survivors
- ✓ Cats prefer to eat alone

When forced to eat together²:

- Conflict behaviors are often suppressed to access food
- Level of tension between cats may increase at other times
- Negative emotions at feeding times lead to digestion problems, inter-cat conflict and obesity



2. Heath SE, German AJ. Feline Obesity: A medical disease with behavioral influences. Feline Behavioral Health and Welfare (2016)

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Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery (2022) 26, 1030-1047

2022 ISFM/AAFP Cat Friendly Veterinary Environment Guidelines

HEALTHY HABITS, HEALTHY CATS
FELINE ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS
<https://my.royalcanin.com/Help/digital-tool-kit>

ROYAL CANIN
INCORPORABLE IN EVERY DETAIL

Your Cat's Environmental Needs
Practical tips for pet owners
by Truemeo

How to Feed a Cat
Addressing Behavioral Needs
by Truemeo

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Diagnosing Obesity

- **Body condition scoring**
 - Most common method
 - Based on physical characteristics

- **WSAVA validated scale**
 - 1-9 (whole numbers)
 - BCS > 7 = overweight/obese
 - BCS 6/9 appropriate for many cats
 - Associated with longest survival times in middle aged cats (Teng 2018)



- Overweight: 10-19% over ideal weight
- Obese: > 20% of the ideal weight

Teng KT, (2018) Strong associations of nine-point body condition scoring with survival and lifespan in cats. JFMS.

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Using BMI (Body Mass Index)

- Predicts body fat content in cats³

Uses 2 body measurements in a standing cat:

- Ribcage circumference
- Leg index measurement (LIM) - the distance between the patella (knee) and the calcaneal tuber (hock) of a posterior limb

$$\% \text{ Body fat} = \left(\frac{\text{Ribcage}^2}{\text{LIM}} \right) - \text{LIM}$$

- BMI 10-29% = healthy weight, non-obese
- BMI > 30% = overweight/obesity

3. Butterwick R. How fat is that cat? JFMS, 2000

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Other parameters

- Hyperlipidemia/Triglycerides (TG) > 165 mg/dL
- Low serum adiponectin (< 3 ug/ml)
- High serum amyloid A (SAA) > 200 ng/ml



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What about disease prevention??



Overweight and obese body condition in ~4.9 million dogs and ~1.3 million cats seen at primary practices across the USA: Prevalences by life stage from early growth to senior

Mathieu Montoya^a, Franck Péron^b, Tabitha Hooker^c, JoAnn Morrison^d, Alexander J. German^e, Virginie Gaillard^f, John Flanagan^g

^a Royal Canin, 6100 avenue de la Petite Couronne, Alfortville Cedex 94470, France

^b Mérieux Veterinary Health, Boxtel, 3715, United States

^c Institute of Life Course and Medical Sciences, University of Liverpool, Liverpool, UK

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Montoya, et al (2025)

1% of kittens are overweight by 4 months of age

By late growth*, up to 15% were already in overweight and obese conditions

Of those overweight during growth, 74% remained in that condition during adulthood

*Late growth = period between weaning and end of growth

Conclusion: Odds of being overweight/obese in adulthood were 1.5x greater for kittens that were overweight during growth.

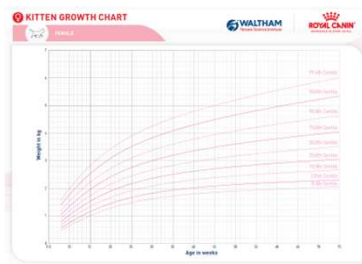
Obesity prevention strategies MUST be initiated in kittenhood.

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Prevention >> Reaction

Growth Charts!



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Create healthy eating environments

➤ Food Puzzles

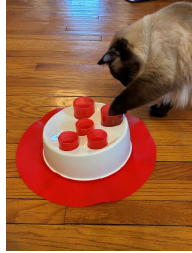
- Encourage maintenance of a natural tendency to self regulate intake
- Cats love to LOOK for food

➤ Environmental Needs⁴

- Confirm the 5 pillars are being met

➤ Provide constant, predictable environment

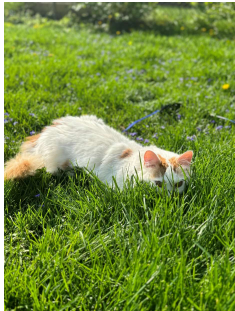
- Feed in a quiet, safe place
- Use separate feeding areas
- Do not feed at human mealtimes



4. Ellis SL, et al. AAEP and ISFM feline environmental needs guidelines. JFMS. 2013

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➤ Hunting

- High motivation to hunt
 - Not just for eating
 - Ready to kill at any moment
- Predatory behavior = important daily time budget
 - Energy input
 - Energy expenditure
- Hunting through play
 - Rapid unpredictable movements
 - Small prey size
 - Rotate toys

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Enrichment



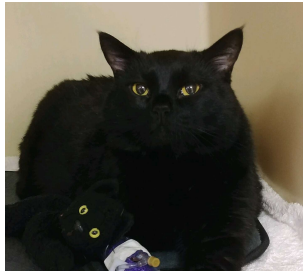
@bebe_and_bettis_bengal_cats
Columbus, OH



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Obesity and Comorbidities



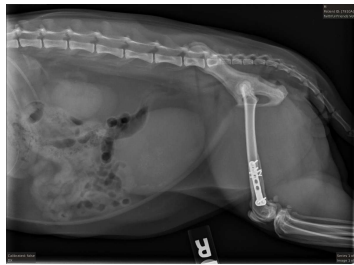
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Obesity & Urinary Tract Obstructions

FACT:

Obesity is a factor predisposing to obstruction.⁵⁻⁷

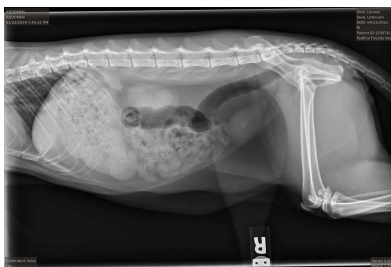


5. Sousa-Filho, et al. Clinical outcomes of 28 cats 12-24 months after urethrostomy. JFMS. 2020
6. Defauw PA, et al. Risk factors and clinical presentation of cats with feline idiopathic cystitis. JFMS. 2011.
7. Segev G, et al. Urethral obstruction in cats: predisposing factors, clinical, clinicopathological characteristics and prognosis. JFMS. 2011.

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Obesity & Urolithiasis

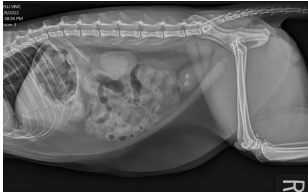


Fact:
Obese cats are at higher risk for struvite urolithiasis

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Obesity & Urolithiasis – why?



- Obese cats are more likely to eat a larger amount of chalcogen minerals
- Engage in less physical activity
- Drink less, which results in more concentrated urine
- In combination with inactivity, the concentrated urine stays in the bladder for a prolonged time, predisposing to urolith formation

1. Saavedra, et al. Overweight and obesity in domestic cats: Epidemiological risk factors and associated pathologies. JFMS. 2024
 8. Burggraaf NS, et al. Analysis of feline and canine uroliths submitted between 2014 and 2020 in the Netherlands. Res Vet Sci 2021

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Dissolution diets

Not created equal!

Key point:
 It is safer to restrict calories when feeding a weight loss diet because they are fortified with protein, vitamins & minerals to prevent problems.

Urinary Dissolution Diet (dry)	Calories (per cup)
Hills C/D Multi-care Stress (ocean fish)	397
Hills C/D Metabolic Chicken	285
Purina PPVD UR	287
BLUE W+U Weight + Urinary	352
Royal Canin Urinary SO + Satiety	239 ★

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Obesity & Diabetes

- Risk of DM is 4x greater in Obese cats
- Every 2.2 lb of excess weight = 30% reduction in insulin sensitivity
 - Mechanism for insulin resistance is complex and multifactorial
 - Accumulation of lipid intermediates into non-adipose tissue interferes with insulin signaling
- ❖ Weight loss will improve insulin sensitivity and may alleviate the need for exogenous insulin



9. Clark M, Hoenig M. Feline comorbidities: pathophysiology and management of the obese diabetic cat. JFMS. 2021

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Obesity & Diabetes: Management

Where do you start?

- Treat diabetes 1st (insulin + diet change)
- 4-12 wks. to stabilize the patient
- Once stable, if BCS > 7/9, then consider a weight loss diet



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Obesity & Diabetes: Management

Dietary goals for diabetics:

1. Achieve ideal body condition to reduce insulin resistance
2. Optimize nutrient composition in diet for glycemic control and increase chance of diabetic remission
3. Support maintenance of diabetic remission



46% OF CATS
diagnosed with diabetes
HAVE AN OVERWEIGHT OR
OBESE CONDITION

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Obesity & Diabetes: Management

➤ Wet food ideal

- Higher water content = more volume fed at less calorie content
- <15% CHO and >40% protein (TNA)

➤ If cat won't accept canned diet:

- Consider a lower calorie dry option
- High protein, low fat, moderate fiber (5-15% dry matter), moderate carb (15-25%)
 - RC Glycoadvanced (299 kcal/cup) – low calorie/moderate fat/low CHO, increased nutrient:caloric ratio (safe for calorie restriction) fiber
 - Purina DM (544 kcal/cup) – higher calorie/high protein/low fiber

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Obesity & Diabetes: Weight loss

- Goal of 0.5-1 % weight loss per week
- Monitor BCS and MCS closely
- Recheck labs q 2-4 weeks
- Monitor for hepatic lipidosis
- Try to avoid peaks and valleys of BG by feeding multiple small meals throughout the day (4 small meals >>> 2 meals)
 - Use a CGM to monitor this!
- Use auto feeders

9. Clark M, Hoernig M. Feline comorbidities: pathophysiology and management of the obese diabetic cat. JFMS. 2021

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Weight loss protocol

- Feed at 80% RER for ideal weight
- Reduce current calorie consumption by 20%

$$\text{Ideal weight (kg)} = \frac{\text{Current weight (kg)}}{\text{Overweight factor}}$$

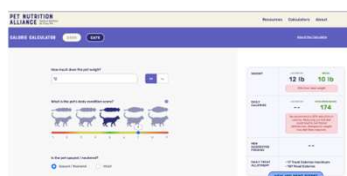
BCS: 6 = 1.1
7 = 1.2
8 = 1.3
9 = 1.4

Feed 35-40 Kcal/kg ideal weight - per day

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Petnutritionalliance.org



vet.royalcanin.org



Weight Management Tools

Weight Management Vet Detailer
Safety Consumer Brochure - Canine & Feline
Safety Consumer Brochure - Feline Only
Nutritional Assessment Form
Body Condition Score Poster
Body Condition Score Tear Pad
Healthy Weight Award
Waiting Room Table Tent Asset
Muscle Condition Score Guide 2024

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Auto-feeders



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Obesity & Constipation

- Obesity exacerbates orthopedic pain & neurologic disease making posturing to defecate difficult

Fact: Cats with higher BCS are at an increased risk of presenting to the ER for constipation¹⁰



10. Benjamin SE. Retrospective evaluation of risk factors and treatment outcome predictors in cats presenting to the ER for constipation. JFMS. 2020.

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Obesity & Constipation

- Fecal score EVERY patient at EVERY exam
- Teach pet parents how to monitor fecal scores
- Keep these cats on your radar!



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Obesity & Chronic Enteropathy

Chronic = clinical signs >2 weeks

+

Enteropathy = disease of the GI tract

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Unexplained weight loss*
- Hyporexia
- Constipation



**KEY POINT: Not all cats with Chronic enteropathy are losing weight!*

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What about Hairballs?

➤ Often assumed to be NORMAL

- Short haired cats: 1-2/year
- Long haired cats: 3-4/year

➤ Increased hairball production indicates underlying chronic disease:

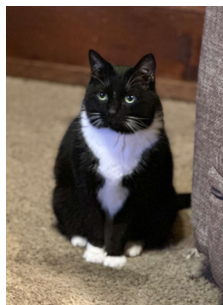
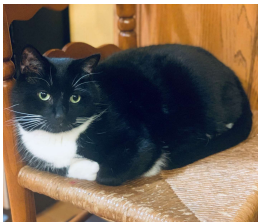
- Excessive hair ingestion
 - Allergies
 - Fleas
 - Chronic pain/stress
- Altered upper gastrointestinal motility
 - Diet intolerance, IBD, etc.



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Case Example: Monte



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Monte

Labwork

- CBC
- CHEMISTRY
- Pancreatic lipase
- Total T₄
- Urinalysis
- UPC
- FIV/FELV/HW

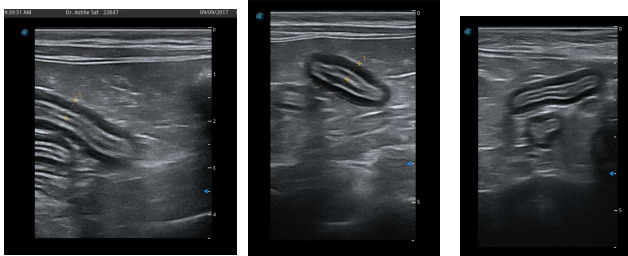


Boring

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Ultrasound

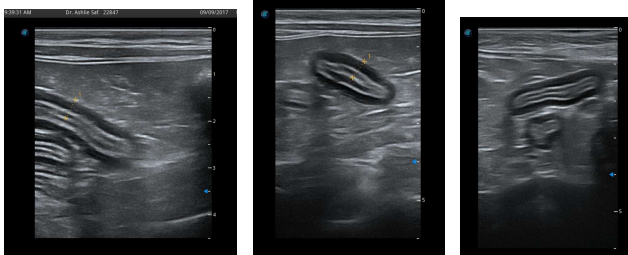


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Ultrasound

Steroids?



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EFFECTIVE WEIGHT MANAGEMENT
Provides safe weight loss and helps avoid weight regain. 97% of cats lost weight in 4 months using this nutritional approach.¹

BEGGING CONTROL
High natural fiber level keeps cats satisfied between meals. Nutritional approach shown to help control begging in 82% of cats during weight loss.¹

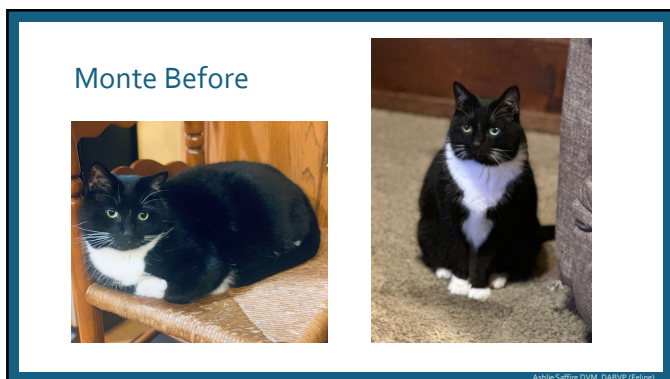
HYDROLYZED PROTEIN
Hydrolyzed soy protein, composed of low molecular weight peptides, is highly digestible and supports gastrointestinal and dermatological health.

SKIN BARRIER
Formulated to support the skin's natural protective barrier for skin health.

11. Flanagan J, Bissot T, Hours MA, Moreno B, German AJ. An international multi-centre cohort study of weight loss in overweight cats: Differences in outcome in different geographical locations. PLoS One. 2018.

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Monte after 6 months:



- ✓ Complete resolution of vomiting in 2 weeks
- ✓ Successful weight loss in 6 months
- ✓ No medications

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Weighty Conversations

FACT: >60% of the domestic feline population is overweight or obese



KEY POINT: Almost half your records should contain physical exam findings AND medical recommendations on patient's being overweight.

12. Association for Pet Obesity Prevention. Pet Obesity Survey Results. 2021. www.petobesityprevention.org

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Veterinarian Perspective

- Fear of upsetting, angering, or causing offense to caregiver
- Fear of LOSING a client by harming the vet-client relationship
- Poor compliance leads to poor weight loss outcomes & frustration



Professional anxiety, apprehension, avoidance

12. Churchill, J., & Ward, E. (2016). Communicating with Pet Owners About Obesity. Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice.

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Veterinarian Perspective

- Fear of upsetting, angering, or causing offense to client
- Fear of LOSING a client by harming the vet-client relationship
- Poor compliance leads to poor weight loss outcomes & frustration



Professional anxiety, apprehension, avoidance

Reality

- In one survey, only 17% of pet owners reported embarrassment or discomfort when being told a pet was overweight

12. Churchill, J., & Ward, E. (2016). Communicating with Pet Owners About Obesity. Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice.

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Feline Obesity in Veterinary Medicine: Insights from a Thematic Analysis of Communication in Practice

Alexandra M. Phillips¹, Sarah B. Gray², Rebecca J. Ross³, and Lindsay J. Adcox⁴

- Qualitative study – **2017, Eastern Ontario**
- Purpose was to understand how or how often veterinarians and feline caregivers address obesity during clinical appointments
- Video recordings of 17 veterinarians during 284 actual appointments
 - 123 feline appointments

13. Phillips AM, et al. Feline obesity in veterinary medicine: insights from a thematic analysis of communication in practice. Frontiers in Veterinary Science. 2017.

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Only 25 appointments (out of 284) were identified where 12 (17) veterinarians, and their clients spoke about obesity¹³

13. Phillips AM, et al. Feline obesity in veterinary medicine: insights from a thematic analysis of communication in practice. Frontiers in Veterinary Science. 2017.

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What they found?

- Several missed opportunities to discuss obesity during the exam
- Communicative Misalignment between Veterinarians and Clients
 - Vet and client conversation differs in terms of topic, understanding, intent, or goal
 - Client thought their pet was at an "acceptable" weight despite the overweight assessment by the veterinarian
 - Vet or client asked a question and the other responded in a manner that did not directly answer the question
 - Weight & diet discussion topics were often ignored, dropped, and misunderstood

13. Phillips AM, et al. Feline obesity in veterinary medicine: insights from a thematic analysis of communication in practice. *Frontiers in Veterinary Science*. 2017.
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➤Dropped topic

- Veterinarian NOT saying what they are thinking
- No discussion of weight beyond the initial report of weight increase



➤Absent recommendations

- Lack of clear recommendations & missed opportunities
- Vague directions were not effective and confused clients
- Lack of discussion of exercise and activity

13. Phillips AM, et al. Feline obesity in veterinary medicine: insights from a thematic analysis of communication in practice. *Frontiers in Veterinary Science*. 2017.
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➤Resistance

- Client didn't agree with recommendation (perceived obstacles at home):
 - Multiple cats
 - Treats are important to give
 - Free feeding (vs measured)
 - Food palatability
- Greater resistance when pursuing a topic singularly VS circling back to the subject later (helical)



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What worked?

➤ Humor

◦ Positive & empathetic humor

- Realigns communication
- Reinforce the vet-client relationship (well received by both parties)
- Lightened the mood, reduced tension
- Softened anticipated resistance by the client
- Created an environment that invited further expansion on the discussion point



◦ Negative humor increased tension and resistance

- In some cases, humor remained unreciprocated or negatively influenced the encounter

13. Phillips AM, et al. Feline obesity in veterinary medicine: insights from a thematic analysis of communication in practice. Frontiers in Veterinary Science. 2017.

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➤ Patient-Directed Speech

- For the **benefit of the overhearing audience** rather than the patient itself
- Often used to realign the conversation between vet and client
- Sometimes used with or to project humor
- **Can be used to reintroduce a sensitive topic, provide assessment and perspective**
- Allows the vet to circle back to the diet/weight topic several times and help identify and dispel some of the client's reasons for resistance (helical strategy)



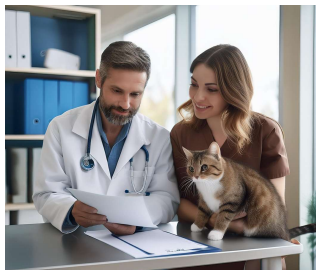
13. Phillips AM, et al. Feline obesity in veterinary medicine: insights from a thematic analysis of communication in practice. Frontiers in Veterinary Science. 2017.

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Break the ice

1. Use humor
2. Patient directed speaking
3. Trick the owner into starting the conversation
 - Discuss BCS
 - Show them the scale
 - They will be curious what this means
4. Discuss what means most to the pet parent!



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Information about life expectancy related to obesity is most important to cat owners when deciding whether to act on a veterinarian's weight loss recommendation

Katie A. Sutherland, PhD¹; Jason B. Cox, DVM, PhD²; Catherine N. H. Groves, PhD³; Megan L. Shepherd, DVM, PhD, DACVIM⁴; Lauren E. Grant, PhD⁵

Questionnaire design

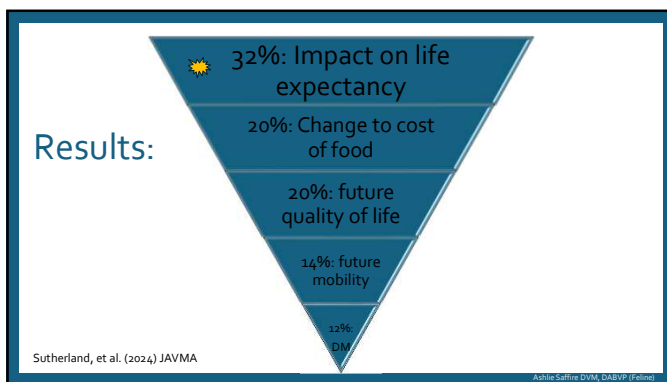
- >1,000 anonymous questionnaires analyzed
- US & Canada
- Looking to understand the most important attribute that would encourage a pet parent to pursue a veterinarian's recommendation to pursue weight management

Table 1—Summary of the attributes and levels included in the choice tasks presented following a hypothetical scenario to identify information from a veterinarian that would most encourage pet owner participants to pursue weight management for a cat diagnosed as overweight.

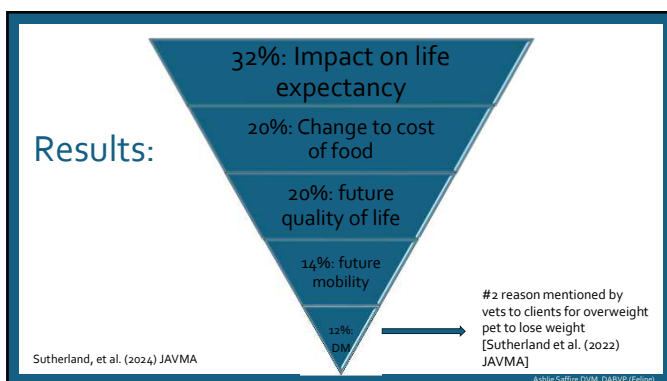
Attribute	Level
Impact on life expectancy	No change Up to 6 mo longer Up to 1 y longer > 2 y longer
Future quality of life	No change to good Good to very good Very good to excellent
Future mobility	No change to good Good to very good Very good to excellent
Risk of developing diabetes (within a year)	No change Reduced risk
Change to cost of food	No change +\$0.16/d +\$0.65/d

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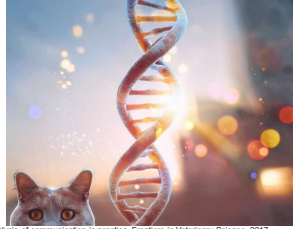
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Keep the conversation going!

Helical Communication

- Visits with the most client engagement and buy-in to weight loss regimens were visits where helical communication was utilized¹³

Helical model: a topic is circled back to and repeatedly touched upon¹⁴



13. Phillips AM, et al. Feline obesity in veterinary medicine: insights from a thematic analysis of communication in practice. *Frontiers in Veterinary Science*. 2017.
14. Adams CL, Kurtz S, ed. *Skills for Communicating in Veterinary Medicine*. 2016.

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Set realistic goals!

- Failure is common
- 50% of pets will hit their target weight
- Focus on the benefits!
 - Longer lifespan with lower BCS
 - Improved QOL
 - Improved mobility with just 6-9% weight loss! ¹⁴
- "Golden Period" is the first three months when compliance is highest and most weight is lost - Dr. Alex German
- Be willing to compromise



14. Marshall WG, et al. The effect of weight loss on lameness in obese dogs with osteoarthritis. *Vet Res Commun* 2010.

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Create an individualized plan

Complete Weight Loss

- Achieve the ideal body weight
- Goal: longer lifespan, avoid disease
- Young, healthy pets

Partial Weight Loss

- Target weight (vs ideal weight)
- Goal: improve QOL, overall function
- May be better for older pets with comorbidities/disease



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Close the deal

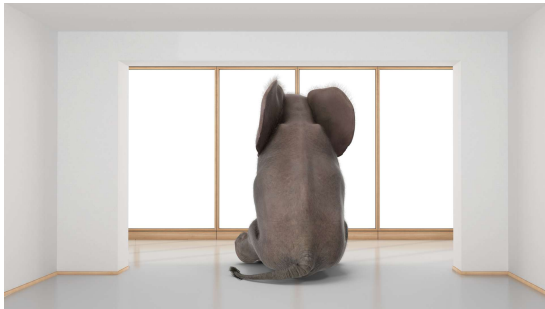
Finish with a clear recommendation

- Based on what the caregiver wants to achieve
- Sometimes small steps needed
 - Caregiver knows there is a problem but isn't ready to address yet
 - Consider scheduling a recheck weight visit with a veterinary nurse
 - Send home BCS chart



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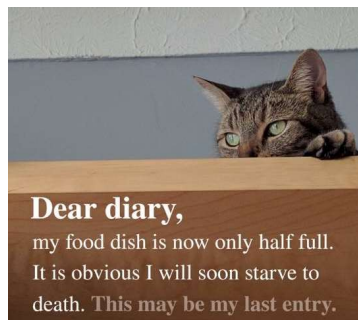


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Thank You!

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