



YOUR CAT'S HEALTH, OUR PASSION • VOLUME 7, ISSUE 12 • DECEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER

IS YOUR KITTY OVERWEIGHT?

The holidays can be a special time of the year, with friends and family members coming together, socializing, attending parties, and enjoying really great food. With such an abundance of goodies, it can be a challenge to maintain food intake at a healthy level!

Cats can face the same weight challenges as humans, not just during the holidays but year-round. A kitty's metabolism, food intake volume, and energy output affect their weight and overall body condition. Excess weight can develop when food intake exceeds energy requirements—in other words, when your cat is eating more calories than he or she is burning in a day.

How can you tell if your kitty is overweight? A general rule of thumb is, while you shouldn't be able to see your kitty's ribs, you should be able to easily feel them when you put your hands around the ribcage and lightly press. If you can't feel the ribs unless you push harder, there's likely a bit too much padding.

An overweight cat is at risk of developing a number of health problems, including heart, thyroid, or other metabolic disorders; arthritis and joint pain; Type 2 diabetes; and liver problems.

If you think your kitty may be overweight, it's important to have your veterinarian perform a physical examination. Although excess weight is usually related to too much food and too little exercise, there are some medical conditions that can cause weight gain. If a thorough exam doesn't turn up a medical problem, your vet can work with you to develop a gradual weight-loss program for your cat.

Feline weight-loss programs, which often include special veterinary diets, need to be managed very carefully, and only under strict veterinary supervision. Cats have a unique metabolic response to fasting or dieting. When the amount of a kitty's food is decreased too rapidly, he or she is at risk of developing a serious (and often fatal) disorder called Feline Hepatic Lipidosis (also known as fatty liver disease).

To help your kitty keep off excess weight, increase his or her activity level by having a play session together every day. Interactive toys in your kitty's environment will let him or her enjoy a good workout even when you're not home. And avoid feeding snacks or table scraps to your kitty year-round—not just during the holidays.



Although a successful weight management program may require permanent changes in the behaviors that have promoted your kitty's excess weight, your kitty's health and quality of life will greatly benefit.

COLD-WEATHER SAFETY NOTE: FAN BELTS

'Tis the season to thump on the hood of your car. The weather is getting colder and kitties are looking for places to stay warm. Sadly, some animals look to a warm engine to cuddle up with.

Please help keep kitties safe during the winter months. Before starting your car, take a moment to thump on your hood to let sleeping cats know it's time to leave. Serious injuries (including burns and fan belt accidents) can be avoided by this one simple action.

DECEMBER SPECIAL OFFER FOR OUR READERS

Through December 31, board your kitty at the Sacramento Cat Hospital and every sixth night is free! That's 6 nights of boarding for the price of 5! (Please note, additional charges will apply for dispensation of medications or other treatments while your kitty is our guest. Your kitty must have received a wellness exam at the Sacramento Cat Hospital within the past 12 months.)

Please give us a call at (916) 488-4161 or stop by our front desk for more information or to make your boarding reservation.

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