

# Healthy Weight, Not Heavy Weight

Why is weight important?

Maintaining a healthy weight on your dog is an essential part of keeping potential problems at bay.

Obesity will affect every major part of your dog's body in little time.

An overweight dog has added stress on his joints, bones and muscles. The bones have to carry the extra weight, resulting in worse fractures should an accident occur, the muscles have to struggle to move the extra weight around causing strains and sprains, and the joints can deteriorate faster resulting in Osteoarthritis in younger dogs. Hip dysplasia, and other degenerative joint diseases can be directly linked to a pet's weight problem.

There's still more to worry about. Obesity leads to severe cardiovascular problems in pets as well. If your dog is overweight, he is in danger of suffering arrhythmia and heart failure.

How do I know if my dog is overweight?

You can do this at home, but it is important to have your dog checked regularly by a veterinarian, and more so if you discover Buddy is already pushing his limits.

To see if your dog is sitting nicely at a healthy weight, stand beside and just run your hand along his ribs. Can you feel them as shallow indents under his skin? You should be able to count them by feeling for them, but they shouldn't be protruding so much that you can count them by sight alone. If you can't feel his ribs, take him in for a check up and confirmation.

Every dog should have a definable "waist", indented at the belly, from behind his ribs to his legs. If you can not see where his ribs end from the side, then there is definitely a problem.

