

What are your pet's New Years Resolutions?



Obesity in pets is becoming a significant problem. We regularly see overweight and obese patients in the clinic. An overweight pet is prone to a host of related problems, including: diabetes, joint-, ligament- and tendon- difficulties, breathing difficulties and heart issues. Overweight cats can also develop skin problems from not being able to groom themselves properly. The overall impact on comfort and longevity can be dire. Most dogs and cats are getting larger for the same reason people are – too much food and not enough exercise.

The best way to start a weight loss program is with a trip to ABVC. You'll want to make sure your pet doesn't have any problems that might make lifestyle changes difficult or dangerous. We can also suggest a food plan and strategy to help you reach your goal.

It is important to stick to the regime and not give extra treats, as they all add up in the overall calorie intake. In addition all family members must be willing to commit to the weight loss program. We can arrange regular weight checks with the nurses to track your pet's progress and make adjustments to our recommendations.

Every breed has approximate weight guidelines however there is individual variation. A healthy pet will have a little padding on them, but you should be able to feel the ribs easily. Your pet should have a definable "waist" at the bottom of the rib cage, a small tuck-in at the stomach.

Dubai has its own complications for keeping weight gain in line. Summers are too hot to allow pets to run around outside and irrespective of season all dogs must be kept on a lead in public. It is important to walk your dog early in the morning and late at night. Cats can be entertained inside through play and many types of toys can encourage a cat to move, e.g. a fishing rod.

Humans have a strong emotional association with food and we carry this over to our pets. Get out of the habit of expressing love for your pets by handing them food, whether from your own dish or from a box of treats. As we control what they eat it is our responsibility to maintain the correct weight balance assuring herewith the health of our pets.

Never give food to a begging pet, since it just reinforces this behavior. When you need to give a treat, such as to reward good behavior while training, use the smallest size possible by breaking off a tiny bit instead of feeding a whole treat. Keeping your pet's weight down is not only good for your pet's health and quality of life, but it will save money on veterinary care.

Yes, it will be hard in the beginning, with those begging eyes, but don't give in. Your pet's life will be happier and longer if it's not burdened by obesity.