

**Adult Cat, Kitten**

KITTENS AND ADULT CATS: THE IMPORTANCE OF STAYING LEAN

Overweight and obese cats are at risk for several chronic diseases and a shorter life span. Prevention of obesity by regularly monitoring their body condition, starting as young adults, and adjusting the amount of food as needed can help cats live longer, healthier lives.

**Key Messages**

- Preventing obesity is better – and easier – than treating it, especially considering the challenges associated with putting a cat on a weight loss program.
- Obesity in cats is associated with an increased risk of a shortened life span and several health conditions, including osteoarthritis, diabetes mellitus, urinary tract diseases, liver problems, lameness and skin diseases.
 - A recent study also reported a high body condition score to be associated with hypertension, asthma, diarrhea, eye problems and allergic conditions in cats.
- Routinely monitoring a cat's body condition at home is simple and easy – look for a waist from above, check for a tummy tuck from the side and feel over the ribs.
 - If changes are noticed in a cat's body condition, the amount of food fed can be adjusted as needed.

Additional Resources

Laflamme, D. P. (2012). Obesity in dogs and cats: What is wrong with being fat? *Journal of Animal Science*, 90(5), 1653-1662. doi:10.2527/jas.2011-4571

Teng, K. T., McGreevy, P. D., Toribio, J. A. L. M. L., Raubenheimer, D., Kendall, K., & Dhand, N. K. (2018). Associations of body condition score with health conditions related to overweight and obesity in cats. *Journal of Small Animal Practice*, 59(10), 603-615. doi:10.1111/jsap.12905

Hoelmkjaer, K. M., & Bjornvad, C. R. (2014). Management of obesity in cats. *Veterinary Medicine: Research and Reports*, 5, 97-107. doi:10.2147/VMRR.S40869

The Purina Institute aims to help put nutrition at the forefront of pet health discussions by providing user-friendly, science-based information that helps pets live longer, healthier lives.