



Adams Vets news

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Discussing Pet obesity

Obesity in dogs and cats is not just a 'cosmetic issue' but is actually a chronic and damaging disease. It is now the most common medical disorder of companion animals. A dog or cat is classified as overweight when they exceed their ideal weight by 10% and are classified as obese when they exceed their ideal weight by more than 20%. It is estimated that 39% of cats and 59% of dogs in the UK are overweight or obese.

Obesity is known to predispose overweight animals to a variety of associated disorders:



- ✓ osteoarthritis (obese pets are three times more likely to suffer from this)
- ✓ cardiac disease
- ✓ respiratory disease
- ✓ urinary tract disorders
- ✓ Diabetes Mellitus

Quality of life and life expectancy can both be reduced as a result. The disease is preventable and yet many people still fail to recognise obesity or to treat it seriously.

Obesity develops when 'energy in' exceeds 'energy used' for prolonged periods. Whilst some other factors such as genetics, some endocrine disorders and neutering can predispose the disease, the primary cause is this simple energy imbalance. It is usually the result of overfeeding and insufficient exercise. Contributory factors include inaccurate measurement of food portions, excessive treating, inactivity and indoor lifestyles.

A healthy weight loss programme combines a correctly formulated calorie-controlled diet with appropriate levels of exercise. If your pet is overweight, we can help you and it's FREE. Come and get him or her weighed. Our qualified nurses run weight-loss clinics to provide you with:

- ✓ a calorie-controlled diet that provides the necessary vitamins and minerals for health and helps your pet to feel full
- ✓ regular monitoring visits to provide expert support and advice throughout the programme
- ✓ regular weigh-ins and body condition scoring
- ✓ exercise advice



Come to the surgery anytime to get your pet weight checked and if the nurse spots a concern she can advise attending a weight loss clinic. It is important that the pet does not lose weight too quickly but equally he or she must make steady progress. Each month the nurse will check your pet and make sure that all is going to plan and help you make adjustments to continue in the right direction.



Weight clinics are free of charge and any diet food required is also eligible for a 25% discount in February.

Play With Your Cat More

This year make a resolution to play with your cat more. Play is important for kittens and adult cats and should be encouraged. In young kittens, it helps their physical development and coordination. It provides them with the skills they need for hunting such as stalking, pouncing, batting, grasping and biting. In adult cats, it can relieve boredom, prevent behaviour problems and provide exercise which reduces weight gain and future health problems. This is especially important for indoor cats. Playing with your cat regularly will teach you about your cat's personality and strengthen the bond and trust between you.

What do cats like to play with?

Toys that move in a rapid or unpredictable way tend to appeal to cats because they mimic a mouse or a bird. Toys with different textures that are approximately prey sized are popular as are toys that reflect light. Many cats love squeaky toys but some can be startled so introduce them carefully. There are many available toys that fit the bill. Balls, artificial mice and fishing rod toys are readily available from pet stores.



Climbable cat trees provide hiding places and a high shelf from which to watch the world go by. They are a firm feline favourite, while others simply prefer using the cardboard box it all came in as a cat cave!



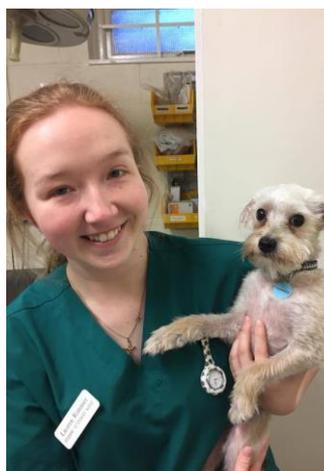
Don't play rough and tumble games or tease your cat by moving your fingers or feet under duvets and rugs which can encourage your cat to grab and bite you. Don't lift toys so high that you encourage your cat to jump up. Allow your cat time to "catch" the toy with its paws and bite at it, otherwise your cat may get frustrated or lose interest. You can increase the interest your cat shows in a toy by rubbing it in catnip (*Nepeta cataria*). About 50 per cent of cats will respond to the active but harmless chemical in this herb by miaowing and rolling.

Our cats don't have to hunt for their food but you can add some excitement and activity into feeding time by using a food ball.

This is a ball just bigger than a tennis ball, in which you can put dried cat food. As the cat pushes and bats the ball with its paws the pieces of food fall out.

Play with your cat:

- ✓ Play for a few short sessions every day
- ✓ Allow your cat to catch and grab the toy at the end of each game
- ✓ Provide a variety of toys and swap them every few days to keep your cat interested
- ✓ At the end of each session tidy away toys with string, or anything that might present a danger to your cat
- ✓ Never force your cat to play or be trained
- ✓ Have fun!



Jen and Lauren passed their final exams so are now qualified nurses.

We are very proud of them!
Well done