



5 Tips to Help Keep Cats at a Normal Healthy Weight

According to recent findings by the Association of Pet Obesity Prevention, an estimated 60% of cats are overweight or obese, which can have serious and potentially life-threatening health risks for cats, including diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. Overall, obesity has been shown to shorten a cat's lifespan, and even being moderately overweight can reduce a cat's life expectancy.

If your cat is carrying extra weight, here are five tips to help keep your cat at a normal healthy weight.

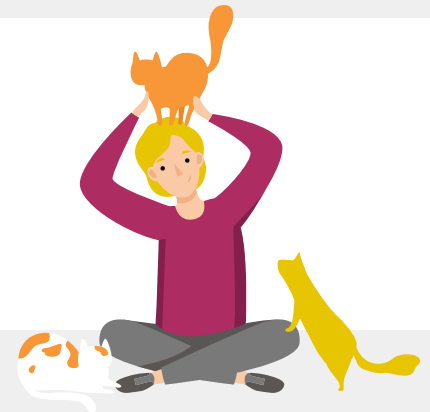


1. Know Your Cat's Ideal Weight

While many online sources say that a cat's ideal weight should be around 8-10 pounds, the ideal weight for an individual cat depends on its frame. Most veterinary practices use a body condition scoring system on a scale of either 1-5 (with 3 being normal) or 1-9 (with 4.5 being normal). If you don't know whether your cat is at an ideal weight, contact us and we'll be happy to provide you with an assessment.

2. Play With Your Cat

Spend time playing with your cat. Get out those crinkle balls or just flick a crunched-up ball of aluminum foil across the room for your cat to chase. Your cat doesn't really care what kind of toy you use. Your cat will simply be jazzed that it's playtime with you and will burn off calories in the process.

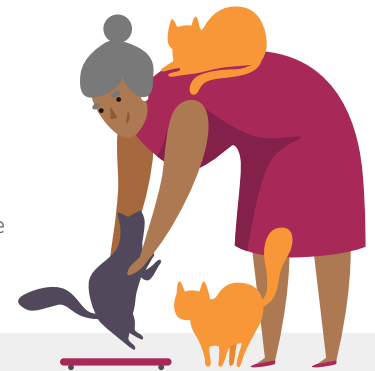


3. Use a Dispensing Toy

Place a portion of your cat's daily dry food into a treat ball or other dispensing toy. Batting around a treat ball provides fun and exercise for a food-motivated cat.

4. Regularly Weigh Your Cat

Regularly weigh your cat every 2-3 weeks (or at minimum, once per month). Regular weigh-ins are an important part of successful feline weight loss and keeps everyone accountable. Weight Watchers® has been using this principle for decades. It's important to verify weight loss, to ensure that it's neither too rapid nor excessive, and to determine when enough weight has been lost.



5. Maintain Your Cat's Weight

Once your cat has achieved an ideal body weight and condition, it's important to maintain your cat's weight. To do this, we can help you find an appropriate food and portion for weight maintenance. Portion control is critical at this stage to prevent your cat from regaining weight. Yo-yo weight loss and gain for cats is no healthier than it is for humans.