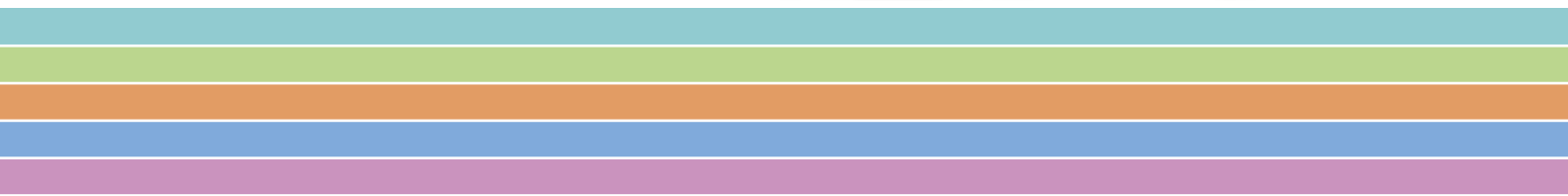




Pet Obesity Ten Years On

2009 – 2019



Contents

A Welcome from Michael Bellingham	03
Ten years on – Where are we now?	04
Ten years of industry work to combat obesity	04
Ten years of PFMA work to combat obesity	05
PFMA Obesity Research – Vets	06
PFMA Obesity Research – Pet owners	07
Why are we struggling to beat the obesity epidemic?	08
The cost of obesity	12
Improving quality of life with obesity care	13
Looking at solutions – Feeding the right information	14
Looking at solutions – What one thing would you do?	16
Looking at solutions – Where do we go from here?	18



Welcome to our Pet Obesity Report 2019

This year marks the tenth anniversary since the publication of PFMA's first Obesity Report¹. Over the last ten years, with expert assistance from our members, vets and nutritionists, we have been working hard to tackle the obesity epidemic in pets.

At the PFMA, we have focused on supporting pet professionals and encouraging pet owners to understand the importance of a nutritionally balanced diet and healthy lifestyle for pets – organising events and writing material about good pet nutrition. This has been balanced with educational work highlighting the dangers of pet obesity.

Whilst obesity prevention seems straightforward ie, not providing more calories than a pet can burn off, the reality is very different. Obesity is a multifactorial condition, which makes it a hard nut to crack. There are a number of contributory factors in addition to calorie intake – activity levels, socio-cultural, psychological and family factors. There are clear parallels with human/childhood obesity. We believe that by focusing on these causes, and taking a multi-disciplinary approach, we will help slow and eventually decrease the levels of pet obesity.

In this report, we are aiming to summarise some of the work undertaken to date by PFMA – and some stakeholders – to combat obesity. We also detail the outcomes of our new pet obesity and nutrition research, which was commissioned among 277 vets and 8000 UK households. These findings are key to understanding professional and owner perceptions of obesity levels and differing levels of awareness. By looking at this research, and speaking to numerous colleagues across the pet industry, we have been able to pinpoint areas where more work can be done.

I would love to be able to come back in another 10 years and say that we have had a really positive impact. To that end I call on all our colleagues in the welfare charities, vet organisations, vet schools and pet trade bodies to ramp up our collaboration to ensure that this happens.



Michael Bellingham
Chief Executive, PFMA



**RESEARCH COMMISSIONED
AMONG 277 VETS AND
8000 UK HOUSEHOLDS**



Ten years on – Where are we now?

When attempting to determine whether the industry's hard work over the past ten years has paid off, it is clear that the profile and significance of obesity has increased among professionals. Pet obesity is now officially recognised as a disease among most pet health organisations such as AMA (American Medical Association) & FDA (US Food & Drug Administration), National Institute of Health, World Health Organisation and World Obesity. In September 2018, the Global Pet Obesity Initiative called for all veterinary professionals to recognise obesity as a disease and this position has been adopted by BSAVA, WSAVA, Dogs Trust, Cats Protection among many more...



Ten years of industry work to combat obesity

Over the last ten years, we have followed and supported superb educational campaigns run by pet charities, rehoming centres, veterinary organisations, pet food manufacturers and other pet organisations – all working hard to highlight the rising obesity levels and giving advice on good health and fitness.

the guardian THE KENNEL CLUB

How to get fit with your dog

Dogs – and their owners – are increasingly overweight. Rachel Dixon explains how to shed the pounds with your pooch.

Running with your dog is a great way to keep fit. Photograph: Jo Kataniga/Alamy

What's it all about?
Get Fit With Fido is a Kennel Club campaign to encourage dog owners to exercise with their dogs. It's widely believed that pet owners are happier and healthier than the rest of the population, but the truth may be more complicated. Indeed, a recent Kennel Club survey found that more than a third of dog owners are overweight. Given that the same survey found that almost a quarter of dogs are also overweight, and a fifth don't get a daily walk, the solution seems obvious.

So it's just about going walkies?
Far from it, but walking is a good place to start. Every dog should have at least one walk a day, and their owners will benefit from a low-intensity cardiovascular workout too. Dog walking is also a sociable activity and a good way to meet people, so it may also benefit your mental health.

I'm bored of walking. What now?
Unless you live in beautiful surroundings, a daily (or twice daily) dog walk can get a little repetitive. But there are lots of other activities you can do with your dog; agility (show jumping for dogs); flyball (a doggy team sport); heelwork to music; obedience training; working trials (heptathlon for dogs). Find more details here.

BBC NEWS **RSPCA**

Big dog Bopper the Whopper is 'too fat for a kennel'

Bopper, an 11-year-old collie, shocked staff at Gables Farm Dogs and Cats Home in Plymouth when he waddled in weighing almost 50kg (8st).

An animal shelter which rescued "Britain's fattest dog" has an even bigger problem on its hands.

BVA British Veterinary Association

Pet obesity epidemic is top welfare concern for vets

Over 60% of vets say obesity is the biggest health and welfare concern for UK pets, according to figures released by the British Veterinary Association (BVA) this World Obesity Day (11 October).

BVA's Voice of the Veterinary Profession survey polled over 1,600 vets across the UK about the welfare issue that they were most concerned about, with almost two-thirds of companion animal vets citing obesity or overfeeding.

EXPRESS **pdsa**

PDOSA Pet Fit Club: Fat cats and diet-dodging dogs among entries

A SUPER-sized terrier with a love for pub grub is the one of the early entries for this year's Pet Fit Club.

Meet the UK's fattest pets as they embark on their fitness journey

THE SEARCH IS ON FOR THE UK'S FATTEST PETS

Heavyweight Alfie is almost twice the size of the average Jack Russell because of his love for steak sandwiches and bar snacks. At 2stone 4lbs (14.3kg), he is facing a weight loss regime run by pet wellbeing charity PDOSA in its national competition to tackle obesity. Couch potato lifestyles and excessive eating is fuelling a four-legged obesity crisis for the nation's pets, the charity warned today as it launched its 13th PDOSA Pet Fit Club.

SKINNER'S

Keeping Fido Fit, Not Fat! – Part 1

Obesity is ranked as one of the most significant human health issues. Similarly, obesity ranks as one of the most common forms of malnutrition in our pet dogs. Malnutrition I hear you say? Surely a malnourished animal is an underweight animal? Well, obesity (and indeed any animal carrying a little more bodyweight than they should) is indeed malnourished, although typically, obesity is a result of an excess of food (and specifically energy, in the form of calories) than a lack of food.

ROYAL CANIN

Pet food manufacturer starts new campaign to combat pet obesity

The 'Fight the Beg' campaign aims to start a conversation about the rising issue of pet obesity.

Pet food manufacturer Royal Canin has announced a new campaign to try to "start a conversation" around rising pet obesity.

MARS campaign

Head of marketing Tom Lindley says pet obesity is an issue that Mars is trying to help tackle, though much of WPD has come from fractured news like Thomson. He admits that with fat pets on the rise, the upward trajectory of weight could be "perceived as a barrier" but insists what's really important is compiling a balanced diet with regular exercise.

Earlier this year, Mars Petcare developed a new personalised 'dog advice' app to help owners track pet caloric intake and exercise and help consumers understand how they should be feeding their pets.

"It can be difficult for dog owners to portion food," he says. "Pedigree Tracks enables them to understand exactly how much they can feed their dog and how that can combine with exercise."

vet times

An alliance of pet food manufacturers is gearing up to run a nationwide pet obesity education campaign throughout May and it's calling on practices to get on board.

The Pet Food Manufacturers Association's (PFMA) Friends For Life drive will take place throughout May 2013. The campaign will encourage owners to get their pet weighed every week, as part of "weigh-in Wednesday" sessions held at local vet surgeries or pet retailers.

A PFMA spokesman told Vetsonline "This nationwide campaign will provide all the necessary tools to educate on good nutrition, responsible feeding and wellbeing to improve longevity of their pets."

NATURAL FOOD FOR PETS DOG CAT RABBIT

Pet obesity: the taboo we need to talk about...

METRO

Obese dog Monty loses more than 3kg after joining a fat club for pets

An obese dog has lost loads of weight after joining a 'fat club' for pets. Chocolate Labrador Collie cross Monty has shed more than 3kg in the last year to help battle his arthritis, after being put on a strict diet.

PURINA

HELP TO REDUCE THE RISK OF PET OBESITY THROUGH COLLABORATIVE PREVENTION PROGRAMMES

OUR GOAL
By 2020, our top 10 markets across Europe will be equipping our customers with the tools and resources to help them prevent pet obesity.

OUR ACHIEVEMENT TO DATE
In 2017, we launched 'Healthy Love', a programme designed to help equip vets with the right information to have conversations with pet owners about maintaining a healthy weight for their pet and the dangers of pet obesity.

Ten years of PFMA work to combat obesity

Since 2009, we have produced numerous educational tools to promote good nutrition and help monitor a pet's health and weight. Many of these can be seen in PFMA's Healthy Weight Hub² – where we now have:

2009
The reality in 2009 – PFMA's first Obesity Report

2009
Pet Size-O-Meters for dogs, cats and rabbits

2013
A weight log for pets, food diary and a 'Did you Know?' poster with the impact on calorie intake from feeding treats, to help owners make informed choices

2013
Pet Size-O-Meters for birds

2014
Pet Obesity: Five Years On – PFMA's follow up Obesity Report

2014
Pet Size-O-Meters for guinea-pigs

2014
'PFMA campaign to GetPetsFit' and 'Weigh in Wednesday'

2015
Two calorie calculators for cats and dogs

2016
Posters about rabbit nutrition and the importance of hay plus the composition of a parrot's diet

2016 ONWARDS
16 Fact sheets on a wide range of nutrition topics

2017
An obesity poster highlighting the importance of 'getting hands on with your pet'

2019
Launched Healthy Weight Hub – pfma.org.uk/weight-hub

2019
Body Size Checker developed – a small graphic to be included on pet food packaging to raise awareness amongst owners of a healthy sized pet

ONGOING
Hundreds of articles on the subject of pet health and obesity

ONGOING
Many expert presentations and seminars focusing on pet health

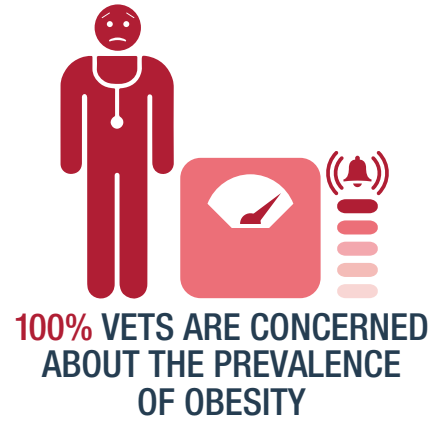
PFMA Obesity Research – Vets

VETERINARY PROFESSIONALS' AWARENESS ABOUT OBESITY LEVELS

On an annual basis, PFMA surveys veterinary professionals at London Vet Show and in November 2018, we spoke with 277 vets for their thoughts on nutrition and obesity.

74% of veterinary professionals surveyed believe that the prevalence of obesity has increased over the last five years³. In fact, vets confirmed that 51% of dogs, 44% of cats and 29% of small mammals are overweight or obese. All these figures have increased since our research five years ago (dogs were at 45%, cats 40% and small mammals 28% in 2015).

100% of vets were concerned about the prevalence of obesity and 73% stated it was 'one of the most prevalent conditions seen'.



Vets think 51% of dogs are overweight or obese



Vets think 44% of cats are overweight or obese



Vets think 29% small mammals are overweight or obese



74% vets believe obesity levels have increased

“ Obesity is one of the most common diseases we currently face but it’s a major issue that we DON’T TALK ABOUT. It’s an uncomfortable topic wrapped in prejudice and blame. ALEX GERMAN, PROFESSOR OF SMALL ANIMAL MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL.

PFMA Obesity Research – Pet Owners

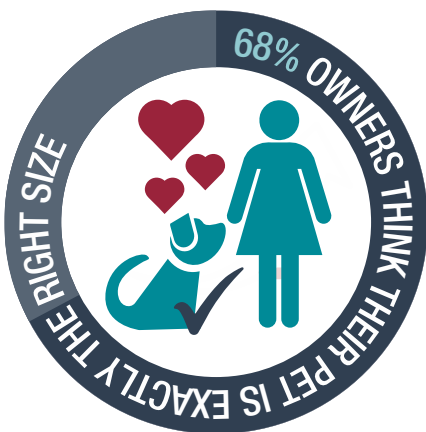
PET OWNERS' LACK OF AWARENESS ABOUT OBESITY

Every year, PFMA works with TNS and Solus Consulting to commission research among 8000 households. In addition to gathering pet population data, we speak to pet owners about nutrition habits and perceptions of obesity.

Owner feedback contrasts hugely with the views of veterinary professionals. This year, our research confirmed that almost **68%** of owners think their pet is exactly the right size and **67%** admit they are not concerned about pet obesity⁵. Only **8%** admitted their pet needs to lose some weight and **12%** said that their pet needed to lose a small amount of weight.

57% of those surveyed had not discussed weight with their vet. Almost half of these pet owners judge their pet's weight by looking at it and **16%** admit they are guessing. Only **12%** have looked at a body condition chart and only **2%** have weighed their pet themselves.

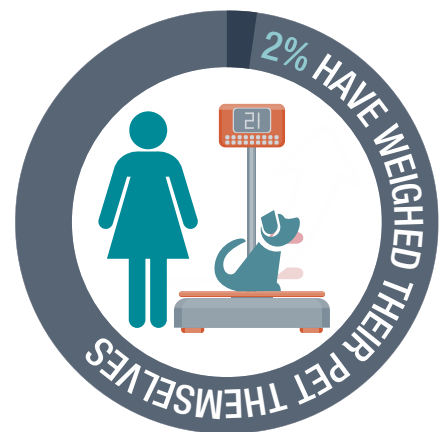
Pet owners need reminders of 'normal' to help counter the gradual change in perception as many people now believe that 'overweight' means 'normal'. PETE WEDDERBURN, VET & JOURNALIST



68% owners think their pet is exactly the right size



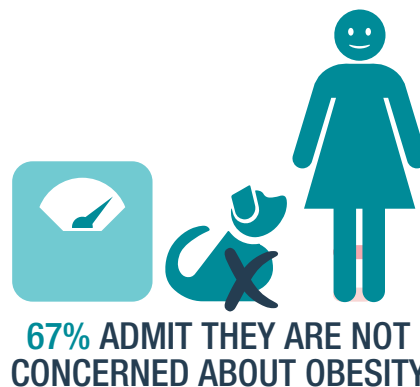
46% owners judge their pet's weight by looking at it



2% have weighed their pet themselves



12% have looked at a body condition chart



Why are we struggling to beat the obesity epidemic?

IS 'FAT' THE NEW 'NORM'?

Pet obesity has many parallels with human obesity. 'Fat' – among humans – has become the new 'norm', according to NHS research. Human obesity has risen rapidly over the last 25 years. Last year, **26%** of adults and **1 in 5** children aged 10-11 were classified as obese. Furthermore, only **26%** of adults and **16%** of children consumed 5 or more fruit and vegetables per day⁵.



26% of adults are obese



1 IN 5 CHILDREN AGED 10-11 ARE OBESE

LIFESTYLE AT THE OTHER END OF THE LEASH

Unfortunately, this lifestyle, at the other end of the leash, has had a significant impact on pet feeding habits and pet health. The same Health Survey for England commented that half (50%) of people who said they were trying to lose weight were not currently using any weight management aids.

With this worrying backdrop, it is understandable that pet owners appear not to understand what constitutes a healthy size for their pets – and how to check their pet's weight. Overweight animals are incorrectly perceived as 'normal'.

ARE WE KILLING WITH KINDNESS?

The ideal way to show love for a pet can be a long walk, a cuddle on the sofa or playing with their favourite toy. However, with pets firmly established as part of the family, bad human habits have crept in and become established into our pet care routines. We are over-feeding and over-treating and guilty of not spending enough time exercising our pets. Are we looking for quick wins?

Our aim should be to help our nation of pet owners to understand the importance of maintaining a healthy weight, to have a clear image of what 'being overweight' looks like and to champion their role as pet owners in supporting the optimum health of their pets. DR KARLIEN HEYRMAN, HEAD OF PETS, PETS AT HOME



TREATING

Vets are united in their thoughts on feeding excessive treats. **98%** believe that feeding 'too many treats' contributes most to the issue of overweight and obese pets⁶. Only **23%** of pet owners admitted to feeding table scraps – although **41%** agreed feeding scraps could be to blame⁷.



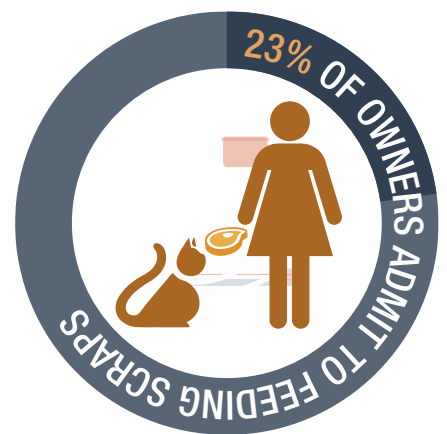
Table scraps, from human food, are inappropriate for pets as they can be too high in fat, salt, sugar and energy content. What may appear to be a small portion for human is a large portion for a pet. For example, one chunk of cheese for a cat could have the equivalent calorie contribution of nine chunks for a human! Avoid table scraps and instead treat with what's appropriate for each species. SARAH HORMOZI, SCIENCE & EDUCATION MANAGER, PFMA



98% vets think excessive treating contribute most to obesity



41% owners believe feeding scraps is a key reason for obesity



23% of owners admit to feeding scraps

OVERFEEDING

88% of vets believe that a key reason for the rise in obesity is overfeeding, with owners not following the product's feeding guidelines. **49%** of pet owners agreed.



Chair of the PFMA Veterinary Nutrition Working Group, Dr Andrew Miller (Premier Nutrition) said, "Here we need an honest assessment of the complex issues around over-feeding – ie, the root causes and the action required. Owners need more guidance on portion control. They need to understand that most pet food is complete and, if carefully measured, it is all a pet needs."

"In addition to reading the feeding guidelines, it is important to highlight that other food items contribute to the daily calorific intake of the pet (eg. manufactured pet treats, table scraps, 'human' food treats), so the intake of a main meal needs to be adjusted to account for these additional calories fed."

Dr Miller continues: "Treats do have a place and can deliver functional benefits to pets (eg, teeth cleaning, joint care) and are a critical motivation for some pets when being trained. In summary, 'feeding guidelines' on pack are 'guidelines' – remember, every pet is different..."



READING THE LABEL

56% of vets commented that pet food packaging guidelines were unsuitable. 30% of pet owners admit they have never read the packaging on their pet's food. An additional 11% said they had read it in the past.

UNDERSTANDING FEEDING GUIDELINES

On every pet food packet there is a feeding guideline which advises how much to feed each day. The guideline is developed using a scientific equation and recommendations are based on a pet's weight and, in some cases, on their life stage and activity levels.

However, this is only a starting point as each pet has its own unique needs. Pet owners need to start with the recommended levels and adjust over time according to any weight change. This needs to be an ongoing assessment and part of an owner's care routine. As pet weight tends to fluctuate throughout the year (e.g. a cat may spend more time being active outdoors in the summer and burn more calories), owners are likely to need to regularly adapt the amount they feed.

Nicole Paley, PFMA Deputy Chief Executive, explains: "Pet nutrition and pet care is a balancing act. All pets are different and have different nutritional needs. The quantity and type of food recommended is not only determined by species, but is also affected by many variables including breed, level of activity, age, size and sex. We need to educate owners on feeding the correct amount for the individual animal, not just the guide level or another level greater than what the pet needs. Owners also need to be aware that weight gain and loss are slow processes taking place over a number of weeks and even months. Regular weight checks and keeping track of this is important."

SIZE OF DOG	WEIGHT	QTY TO FEED
SMALL	5-10KG	A GRAMS/DAY
MEDIUM	10-20	B GRAMS/DAY
LARGE	20-30KG	C GRAMS/DAY
GIANT	40KG	D GRAMS/DAY



Most pet food manufacturers provide excellent customer service with dedicated help lines and plenty of advice. Owners can always contact us for more guidance.
KELLIE CECCARELLI - PFMA COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR (SPECTRUM BRANDS)

REASONS TO REDUCE FEEDING AMOUNTS

Some examples where food portions may need to be decreased (confirmed by assessing the pet's weight or body condition score and overall health):

VETERINARY ADVICE

- ✓ Lower activity levels eg, the pet is receiving fewer walks, or is an indoor cat
- ✓ If the pet is neutered
- ✓ If the pet is a breed prone to weight gain

WHAT ELSE SHOULD PET OWNERS KNOW ABOUT FEEDING AMOUNTS

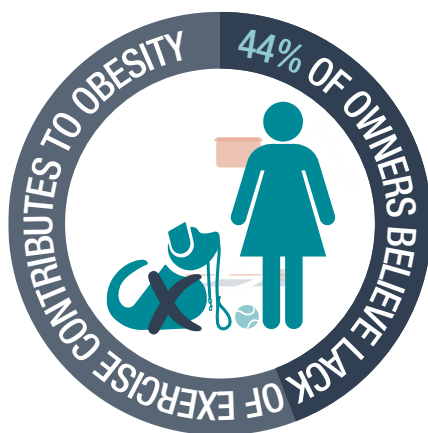
- ✓ The recommended feeding amounts should be based on their pet's ideal weight (not their current weight – a vet practice will be able to advise on this)
- ✓ Different brands of food have different feeding recommendations, so owners should always check the guide
- ✓ Owners should be aware that the feeding amount on pack is a the overall recommended daily portion and should be divided over the pet's meals
- ✓ To contact the manufacturer if they are unsure how much to feed

EXERCISE

80% of vets, but only 44% of owners, believe that a lack of exercise contributes to obesity among pets. Again, this could be explained by the lack of time pet owners have taking their pets for a walk or playing with them.



80% vets believe lack of exercise contributes to obesity



44% of owners believe exercise contributes to obesity



“

Most dog owners understand the importance of exercise for maintaining their pet's healthy body weight. However, they don't often think about this for cats even though obesity is a growing problem for our feline friends. Research shows that indoor cats are especially likely to become obese so actively playing or making them work for food is very important. Using puzzle feeders and fishing rod toys in multiple short bursts, provides mental as well as physical stimulation - so it's win win for well-being. **MAGGIE ROBERTS, DIRECTOR OF VETERINARY SERVICES, CATS PROTECTION**

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY WEIGHT AFTER WEIGHT LOSS

It's not all just about weight loss. It's also important to educate pet owners about keeping their pet at a healthy weight and sticking with a weight management plan once they reach an ideal weight. Unfortunately, about half of the pets who are successful in losing weight, will regain weight⁸. Ongoing vigilance is important.



The cost of obesity

The cost of obesity is not to be underestimated. Shockingly, overweight dogs face a reduced lifespan – potentially up to two years shorter than dogs with a healthy body weight⁹.

Commonly associated conditions in pets with obesity include arthritis, diabetes and heart disease.

However, research¹⁰ highlights a much longer list:

- ✓ Orthopaedic disease
- ✓ Diabetes mellitus
- ✓ Pancreatitis
- ✓ Cancer – mammary, transitional cell carcinoma (TCC)
- ✓ Respiratory diseases
- ✓ Hypertension
- ✓ Urinary tract disorders
- ✓ Lipid disorders
- ✓ Hepatic lipidosis
- ✓ Dermatological disease
- ✓ Gastrointestinal disease
- ✓ Increased anaesthetic risk

In the last few years, we have seen implications for the pet insurance industry, with companies highlighting the number of claims for obesity-related conditions. One insurer, Animal Friends, studied 20,000 pet health records and discovered that the number of claims for treatment of arthritis had more than trebled since 2015¹¹. The repercussions have been widespread with an increasing number of pet insurance companies now rejecting claims for sick animals if they are found to be overweight.

HELP THEM LIVE LONGER, HEALTHIER LIVES

It has been proven that not only is chronic disease delayed in pets who are of optimum weight but preventing pets from becoming obese can also extend their lives.

A 14-year study has shown that dogs fed to lean condition from early puppyhood throughout life can enjoy up to 2 more healthy, active years¹².

“

Preventing obesity is one of the most loving things an owner can do to provide a longer and healthier life for their pet.

DR MARGE CHANDLER, CONSULTANT IN SMALL ANIMAL NUTRITION & CHAIR OF FEDIAF SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD

“

The consensus in the veterinary profession is that obesity is a disease. However, it's not just any sort of disease, it's a chronic disease. This is critical because chronic diseases cannot be cured and, as a result, a focus on prevention is absolutely crucial. **ALEX GERMAN, PROFESSOR OF SMALL ANIMAL MEDICINE, LIVERPOOL UNIVERSITY**



Improving quality of life with obesity care

One of our members, Royal Canin, has worked alongside Liverpool University to help dogs and their owners commit to weight management programmes. The results are amazing, as depicted in these photos.



Romeo, a seven-year-old Labrador retriever first visited the Weight Management Clinic in January 2019, suffering from severe mobility problems and uncontrolled pain. On his obesity care plan, he lost 9 kg, equivalent to 22% % of his bodyweight. This weight loss markedly improved his mobility and has been lifesaving for him.



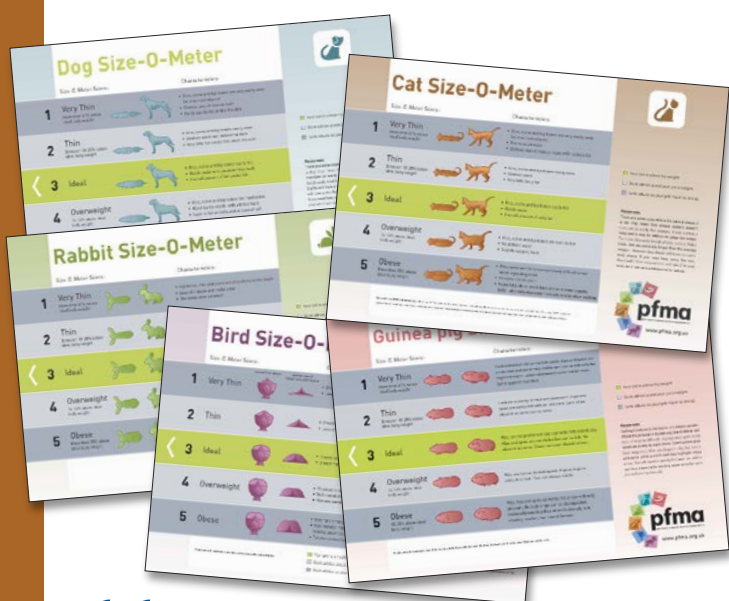
Lulu, an eight-year-old Rottweiler attended the clinic in March 2018. To the owner, she was getting steadily slower on walks, and was not interested in playing with other dogs in the household. By January 2019, Lulu had lost 24 kg (39% of her bodyweight), with dramatic improvements in energy and ability to play.

Looking at solutions – Feeding the right information

With **68%** of pet owners believing their pet is exactly the right weight when **51%** of dogs and **44%** of cats are overweight according to professionals, it is clear that we need to go back to basics and ensure we are feeding the right information. We have a range of educational materials but we need to look at communicating more effectively so that the message cuts through.

HEALTHY WEIGHT HUB

As a first step, we have created a **Healthy Weight Hub**, which contains all of PFMA's weight management posters and tools.



PET SIZE-0-METERS

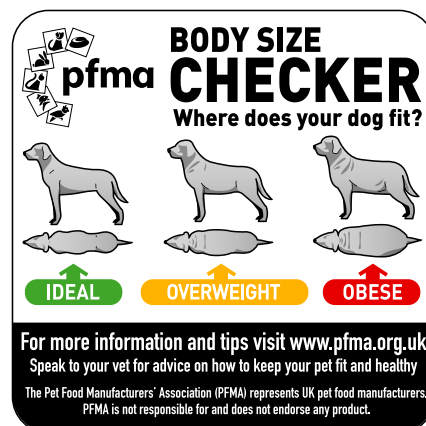
Ten years ago, following the launch of our first Obesity Report, we designed and launched our range of **Pet Size-0-Meters**, which are now available for dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs and birds.

“

Pet food manufacturers could include a graphical and written description of the ideal body condition score on the back of packs of food” ie, Is your pet overweight? You should be able to feel your pet's spine from above, the ribs along the side of the chest, and the waist should be narrower than the chest, from above. **PETE WEDDERBURN, VET & JOURNALIST**

BODY SIZE CHECKER

Moving on from our Pet Size-0-Meters, this year, PFMA has launched the **Body Size Checker**, a small graphic which can be used on pet food packets to raise awareness with owners of what constitutes a healthy body size for a cat, dog and rabbit. PFMA is working with its members and pet retailers to encourage them to take up this initiative so these important educational messages will have a wider reach and wider impact. The PFMA is calling on members and the industry to adopt this initiative and include it on their packaging. It's an excellent way of reinforcing what constitutes a healthy size pet.



WEIGHT MANAGEMENT TOOLS

In addition to communicating about healthy body sizes, we have lots of other resources in our Hub including our Calorie Calculators, Weight Log, Food Diary and Did You Know poster. We also have a range of 16 factsheets on different nutrition topics and access to many weight management themed articles.

Did you know that?

Did you know that many human food treats are unsuitable for our pets and can be very high in calories. At PFMA we suggest feeding treats specially formulated for pets and in limited quantities – this will prevent upsetting the nutritional balance of their main meals. Remember to reduce the size of your pet's meal after feeding treats. Treats should never make up more than 10% of your pet's daily calorie intake.

Weight and body condition log

Name of pet: _____ Starting Weight: _____

WEEKS MONTHS	WEIGHT	BARRELS	PFMA
01			
02			
03			
04			
05			
06			
07			
08			
09			
10			
11			
12			

Food Diary

This food diary will help you keep a record of what your pet is eating – you may be surprised at the amount!

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Food						
Food Measured? Y/N						
All Treats						
Exercise						

Pet Pledge

Thanks for signing up to the PFMA Pet Pledge. The PFMA Pet Pledge will help me and my pet stay on top of her weight. By keeping my promise, I will have a longer, happier life for us both to enjoy.

- I pledge to work hard at giving my pet a healthy lifestyle.
- I pledge to feed my pet the right amount of pet food by following the instructions on the pack.
- I pledge not to feed my pet human food as snacks.
- I pledge to play and exercise with my pet every single day for at least 20 minutes, and to try to consider his/her needs at all times.
- I pledge to watch my pet's weight and to take her/him to the vet or seek advice from a professional if necessary.
- I pledge to love and look after my pet to ensure her/his life is a long and happy life.

Calculating the energy content of prepared pet food and daily energy requirements of adult dogs and cats

Introduction
Providing your pet with the right amount of energy remains an ongoing challenge for pet food companies and the pet food industry. The energy requirements of an individual pet, for a dog or cat, are determined by their breed, age, sex, activity level, and environment. However, the variations in individual requirements can allow us to calculate the energy requirements for a specific breed of dog or cat. This information is for informational purposes only and should not be used as a substitute for professional advice. PFMA body condition charts can be found on www.pfma.org.uk/pet-size-guide.

Table 1: Caloric Density of Energy Producing Nutrients in Prepared Dog Food

Nutrient	% ME (Metabolizable Energy) (kcal/kg)	Energy content of each nutrient in the pack as a % of ME (kcal/kg)
fat	8.6	% protein x 3.5
protein	3.5	% ME x 3.5
Carbohydrate* (Intrinsic fiber excluded or not)	3.5	

Formula 1: Calculating % Carbohydrate (NFE) and % moisture when not listed on the package:
 $\% \text{ Carbohydrate (NFE)} = 100 - 17\% \text{ protein} - 1\% \text{ fat} - \% \text{ fiber} - \% \text{ moisture} - \% \text{ ash}$
 * % moisture for dry food (not for wet food) is not based on the pack, it is based on the moisture content of the pack.

Formula 2: Caloric content of the whole pack (kcal/kg)
 $\text{ME (kcal/kg)} = \text{ME (kcal/kg)} \times 10$

Formula 3: Dog's Daily Energy Requirement (kcal/day)
 $\text{Average DEER for a dog} = \text{ME (kcal/kg)} \times \text{Weight (kg)} \times \text{Activity level (kcal/ME/kg)}$

Formula 4: Cat's Daily Energy Requirement (kcal/day)
 $\text{Average DEER for a cat} = \text{ME (kcal/kg)} \times \text{Weight (kg)} \times \text{Activity level (kcal/ME/kg)}$

Example Case Study for Complete Dry Dog Food

Levin is an adult, medium size breed with 13.5 kg body weight and low activity level. He needs to eat 1000 kcal per day for low activity level. The following table shows the breakdown of the energy content of the product.

Component	Percentage
Crude Protein	20%
Crude Fat	10%
Crude Fibre	7%
Calcium	1.2%
Phosphorus	0.7%
Moisture	10%
Other	43%

What is the caloric content of Levin's dry food?

Table 2: Recommended Daily Energy Requirements (DER)

What is Levin's daily energy requirement (DER)?

Levin eat each day?

A Step-By-Step Guide to Prevent and Manage Pet Obesity

Helping You Get Hands-on With Your Pet

If your pet is overweight, or you notice a weight gain or loss, talk to your vet. There may be a health issue which needs treatment or a special diet.

Find the product. Ask your vet and read the instructions.

Keep Them Moving! Ensure an active lifestyle with lots of walks and playtime. This has mutual health benefits for you and your pet.

HEALTHY WEIGHT WHEEL

Weight management and 'light' products, designed to have a lower energy content compared to the normal range, are available to assist weight loss and/or maintenance. For references and more information please visit our website www.pfma.org.uk.

If you choose to treat your pet, do it occasionally. Adjust meals accordingly to help control calorie intake. Avoid human food and table scraps.

Weight food portions with kitchen scales until you know the amount to feed using a cup. Estimating by volume can be subject to error.

Pet Food Additives

Additives are used in both human and pet food to help ensure quality, safety, freshness, consistency, appearance, odour or taste. Some additives are derived from naturally occurring materials (usually plants) and others are manufactured synthetically.

Antioxidants
Antioxidants are used to prevent oxidative rancidity in pet food. They help to preserve the natural flavour and aroma of the food. Antioxidants are also used to prevent the oxidation of vitamins and minerals in the food.

Preservatives
Preservatives are used to prevent the growth of bacteria and fungi in pet food. They help to extend the shelf life of the food.

Flavour Enhancers
Flavour enhancers are used to improve the taste of pet food. They help to make the food more palatable and enjoyable for the pet.

Colorants
Colorants are used to give pet food a consistent and appealing appearance. They help to make the food more attractive to the pet.

Enzymes
Enzymes are used to help break down the food in the pet's stomach. They help to improve the digestibility of the food.

Minerals and Vitamins
Minerals and vitamins are essential for the health and well-being of the pet. They help to support the immune system and overall health.

Please visit www.pfma.org.uk/weight-hub for our full range of management tools

Looking at solutions – What one thing would you do?

Given that PFMA's research clearly indicates that many pet owners are unaware of the rising scale of obesity amongst their pets, we asked organisations across the pet industry to confirm what **ONE** thing they would recommend for the industry and relevant parties going forwards...

“



THE KENNEL CLUB

There are a number of factors which can contribute to weight gain and obesity in dogs, such as food, nutrition and exercise. It is as important for dogs as well as their owners to keep fit for general wellbeing which benefits both dogs and their owners. CAROLINE KISKO, SECRETARY, KENNEL CLUB



As an organisation and as an industry we have all the right tools. We just need to work together and amplify our messages – encouraging stakeholders to **#feedtherightinformation** and pet owners to **#treatthemright**. Visit pfma.org.uk/weight-hub.

MICHAEL BELLINGHAM, CEO, PET FOOD MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION (PFMA)

To make obesity care a priority, by talking about and treating pet obesity as a disease, every time it is observed. GEORGIA WOODS, VETERINARY NURSE, UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL



As well as diet, communicate the importance of exercise for maintaining a healthy body weight to cat owners. Actively playing with fat cats or making them work harder for their food is vital.

DR MAGGIE ROBERTS, DIRECTOR OF VETERINARY SERVICES, CATS PROTECTION



The one thing that I would like to do would be to encourage vets to educate owners from the start (ie, when they first get a pet) about what is the correct body shape (i.e. body condition score) for that pet to keep a healthy weight lifelong. Once the pet is obese, it's too late – and much harder for the owner too.

VETERINARY TEAM, BLUE CROSS

We need to collaborate across the industry and find ways of communicating key messages to pet owners. ALEXANDRA BAKER, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER



I would like the industry to focus on prevention because obesity is much easier to prevent than to treat. I would like pet caretakers to have more detailed feeding instructions and education on how to adjust feeding amounts to achieve the ideal body condition. CECELIA VILLAVARDE, SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD, EUROPEAN PET FOOD FEDERATION (FEDIAF)

The Pet Industry is all working to the same goal – we want pets to live happy and healthy, long lives. By working together, we strengthen our position and amplify our messages.



One thing I believe is incredibly important is 'modelling behaviour' ie, for pet food manufacturers and pet professionals to demonstrate a maintenance of healthy bodyweight and lifestyle in their own animals (and to some intents and purposes, themselves – difficult territory I know...!), while also acknowledging how they do this. This supports the idea of "re-normalising" what is an appropriate bodyweight is, in addition to the health and welfare gains. DR JACQUELINE BOYD – NUTRITION CONSULTANT, SKINNER'S PET FOODS



Obesity is one of the most common diseases we currently face. It is a major issue, but we DON'T TALK ABOUT IT. It's an uncomfortable topic wrapped in prejudice and blame. In moving forward, we all need to do a better job of holding emphatic, non-stigmatising conversations about obesity, in order to better support owners and support their pets in reaching and maintaining a healthy weight. ALEX GERMAN, PROFESSOR OF SMALL ANIMAL MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

MORE TH>N

We need more incentives for our pets to stay fit and healthy. ANDREW MOORE, DIRECTOR OF PET CLAIMS, MORE THAN



I would suggest that we need to ensure that education links to and results in pet owner behaviour change. PAULA BOYDEN, VETERINARY DIRECTOR, DOGS TRUST



We need to introduce regular weight and body condition checks that start at a young age and continue throughout a pet's life. This should help pet owners recognise weight gain and changes in their pet's size more quickly and, with support from a veterinary professional, take the necessary action to tackle it. SUE PATERSON, PRESIDENT, BSAVA



The annual PDSA PAW Report found that the top reason for pets being overweight or having obesity is lack of owner recognition of the problem. We'd like to see the whole pet industry unite to help tackle this, by improving messaging and information on pet food packaging and ensuring that marketing images show pets who are a healthy shape to avoid normalisation of this issue. VICKI BETTON, VETERINARY POLICY & CAMPAIGNS MANAGER, PDSA



Looking at solutions – Where do we go from here?

We were delighted to receive so much valuable feedback from stakeholders on the 'One thing they would change'. This must inform our strategy going forward.

As with people, there is no quick fix for obesity among pets. It is a chronic disease, which requires careful and ongoing management. However, it is heartening to see that we are all working to the same goal. The pet care industry clearly has huge amounts of energy and enthusiasm to combat obesity.

PFMA will continue to work hard – alongside others in the pet care sector – to raise awareness of this condition. By continuing to produce highly regarded weight management tools and nutritional fact sheets, and educating pet care professionals on nutrition topics, we can help pet owners keep their pets fit and healthy. Research has shown that if dogs are fed to ideal body condition, they can live up to two years longer. This surely is the most persuasive fact of all.

At PFMA we are committed to feeding the right information. However, not only what we communicate but how we communicate is important. As Professor Alex German highlights, obesity can be an uncomfortable topic to address and sometimes this means we don't talk about it. It is essential we have these conversations, but do this in a supportive, non-judgemental way.

We recognise that the issue is too big for any one organisation and it spreads across the different areas of the pet care world – pet food, vets, retailers, groomers, trainers, behaviourists, welfare charities. We all have a role to play to slow down the growth in pet obesity and reverse the trend.

For us the next step is to bring together a body of experts from these areas, including behaviour change experts and those with experience in the human health field, to discuss what changes are needed for maximum impact. We need to assess whether we are feeding the right information and rectify this if not. We need to consider how we are communicating. We are committed to this ongoing journey and it will continue to be a fundamental strand of the work we do.

We hope to come back in another ten years-time and talk about the positive impact of our collective strategies.



Nicole Paley
Deputy Chief Executive, PFMA



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A Step-By-Step Guide To Prevent And Manage Pet Obesity Helping You Get Hands-On With Your Pet

If your pet is overweight, or you notice a weight gain or loss, talk to your vet. There may be a health issue which needs treatment or a special diet.*

Find the product that's suitable for your pet. Ask your veterinary professional for tips and read more on the label or online.

Weigh your pet regularly, and check their body condition using our fun Pet Size-O-Meters. Ideally, you should be able to feel their ribs with very light finger pressure.



Follow the product's feeding guide, as a starting point. Adjustment may be needed depending on your pet's age, neuter status, breed and lifestyle.

Keep them moving!
Ensure an active lifestyle with lots of walks and playtime. This has mutual health benefits for you and your pet.

Weigh food portions with an accurate kitchen scale. Estimating food amount by volume is subject to error.

If you choose to treat your pet, do it occasionally. Adjust meals accordingly to help control calorie intake. Avoid human food and table scraps.

*Weight management and 'Light' products, designed to have a lower energy content compared to the normal range, are available to assist weight loss and/or maintenance.

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#feedtherightinformation #theonething #treatthemright #twoyearslonger