THE BARRACKS
VET SURGERY
MOSMAN

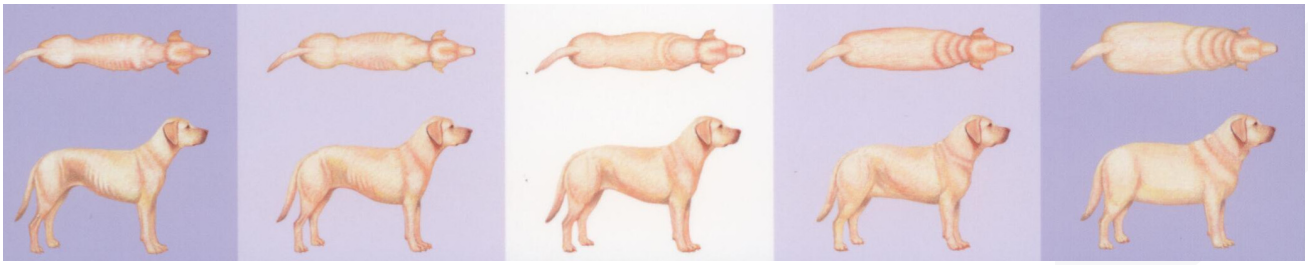
DEALING WITH OBESITY IN DOGS

What is obesity and what are the concerns?
Animals weighing 15% over their optimal weight or more are considered obese. This predisposes them to a shorter life expectancy and the expensive and unpleasant medical complications of cardiac and breathing problems, high blood pressure, diabetes, increased arthritis, pancreatitis, reduced circulation due to reduced movement, constipation, increased chance of stifle injury or cruciate damage, skin problems, liver disease, reduced immune function, plus the pain and discomfort associated with many of these conditions.

How can we address obesity in dogs?
The good news is that these risks can be reversed or reduced! Your overweight pet will be much happier and have more energy as soon as he starts losing weight too.
Try all of the following methods in conjunction for amazing results:

1. Consult your vet to create a weight loss regime and buy veterinary diet food. Discuss the exact amount to be fed each day. Re-visit for free regular weigh-ins and chart your progress.
2. Show everyone in the household the chart and the images below, and write down a goal weight. Place your goal somewhere prominent like on the fridge.
3. Identify the reasons your pet has developed obesity, and address those issues together.
4. Mark a line on a measuring cup and fill food only to that line per meal.
5. If giving treats cannot be prevented, treat from the measured cup INSTEAD of giving a meal. Use squeaky toys, games, training and time together as your new form of reward.
6. Fill half the food bowl with a ball or rock to slow down ingestion.
7. Beginning with gentle exercise, work up to a stimulating exercise plan that gives pleasure to both you and your dog, eg ball games, swimming, evening walks. If that is not possible, employ a regular dog walker.
8. Introduce home made (salt-free) lukewarm (or frozen) chicken stock as a low-cal tummy filler.
9. Use a smaller food bowl.

Thanks to Hills Pet Nutrition for the Image



Far too thin | **Underweight** | **Ideal** | **Overweight** | **Obese**

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