



ANIMAL ANTICS

Note for Pet Owners:

Pet Patrol 365 provides this information for educational purposes only. You should seek the advice of your veterinarian if your pet is ill, as only they can correctly advise on the diagnosis and the recommended treatment for your pet.

Are You Killing Your Pet With Kindness?

Pets love the security of routine and consistency and this applies not only to their diet but also their daily exercise and leadership from you. We all love our pets and want to do the best for them but, sometimes in our efforts to show how much we love them, we may actually be inadvertently harming them. From over-feeding them or feeding them the wrong type of food to not giving them enough exercise could cause serious health problems for our beloved furry friends. With around 25% of dogs classified as obese and more than one third being overweight, this is a common problem that needs addressing. Unfortunately, weight gain is frequently overlooked, since it usually occurs gradually and the old adage that we are “killing them with kindness” is often all too true.

It's important to know that an overweight dog is more at risk in surgery, susceptible to injury and will experience stress on the heart, lungs, liver, kidneys and joints. As the weight increases, so does the risk of developing cardiac, digestive and circulatory problems, diabetes, arthritis, and fatigue along with exercise and heat intolerance.

Facts about Fat

1. Fat is a rich source of energy. Per unit of weight it contains over double the amount of energy when compared to proteins or carbohydrates. When food energy is available in plenty then fat is laid down in the body. This is then converted back to energy when it is needed.
2. Fat is stored in various places in the body. It is associated with internal organs such as the liver and kidneys, but is also laid down under the skin.
3. Although fat is often looked upon negatively, it is actually a very important nutritional requirement in animal diets. As well as supplying energy, fats contribute to palatability and carry essential fatty acids and fat soluble vitamins. A deficiency of these components can lead to impaired wound healing, poor coat condition and dry skin.
4. The fact that fats are so palatable means that they are often included in commercial diets at high levels to make the food more appealing to the animal.

Reasons for Pet Obesity

- Excess dietary energy
- Inappropriate diet
- Inappropriate tit bits and treats
- Bad behaviour (begging, stealing)
- Inadequate exercise
- Breed susceptibility
- Neutering
- Underlying disease (very rare)

Is your pet is overweight?

Despite your feelings, you must try to resist giving in every time your pet demands food or attention from you. Statistics show that pets are facing an obesity crisis, with Britain's dogs and cats among the fattest and laziest in Europe, as owners regularly 'lavish' them with highly calorific 'treats' and then fail to provide them with enough exercise. Remember, it is never too late to change and you can start now with a few simple steps. Next time you want to show how much you love your pet, think about what THEY really need, as opposed to what would make you feel happy.

Action Plan for Obese pets

- Think positively! Weight loss requires common sense and commitment.
- Set realistic targets. Weight loss should be gradual and healthy... but continuous!
- Work closely with your veterinary surgeon. Be honest about feeding habits!
- Employ the services of a professional dog walker to provide a challenging and fun fitness program
- Keep food and exercise diaries, every detail should be logged.
- Get the family involved. Educate them not to undo all your good work
- Implement lifestyle changes gradually. Over-exercising can lead to injuries.
- Stick to your regime! Don't feel cruel by changing dietary habits, your pets health is at stake.
- Recondition yourself! Feeding inappropriate treats to an obese pet is not kind. It is cruel and will shorten their lifespan!

Pet Patrol 365 offers a unique weight and fitness management programme for overweight dogs - don't delay, book an appointment today!

ARTICLE BY PET PATROL 365

01342 851333 / 07974 728967

www.petpatrol365.co.uk

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