



**Happy New Year to all our friends of Flanary Veterinary Clinic. We hope the holidays treated every one well. And thank you to everyone who brought us Christmas treats. Fancy and Maddie want to thank everyone who participated in the Furry Four-legged Friend Food Drive. Your donations filled many tiny bellies this season. With 15 lbs. of treats, 435.7 lbs. of food, and 80 lbs. of kitty litter donated, Fancy and Maddie are proud to have headed up the food drive for the Marshall County Animal Shelter. We are also glad to announce that we examined, vaccinated, and dewormed 45 pets for free that were rescued by The Healing Place from the old McCracken County Humane Society. Right now all but one pet has been adopted from the original ones that were rescued and we are trying to get them spayed or neutered one by one. Ending the year on such a high note makes us wish everyone a happy New Year and good luck on their resolutions.**

## **A Growing Problem**

**Obesity in pets is on the rise. This epidemic is affecting up to 40% of dogs and 30% of cats in the United States. Obesity in dogs and cats affect how they live and make**

them susceptible to numerous health problems if left untreated. Many of us don't realize when our pets start to gain weight. A pound or two may not seem significant, but on a pet, especially a small or medium-sized one, it can be quite significant. If your pet is at a healthy weight, weigh him regularly to monitor any increases in your pet's weight. Also, keep him on a healthy diet and exercise routine because it is easier to prevent obesity than it is to reverse it. However, if your pet is overweight, make the commitment now to help your dog or cat to lose the weight and be healthier. They will live longer, feel better, and will have you to thank!



## How did my pet get overweight?

There are many factors that play a role in our pet's weight gain. Since they cannot go buy their food and treats or go through the fast food drive thru, it comes down to one major cause: it's usually our fault. As sad as it is to think we may have done this to our beloved pet, the good news is that we can also help undo it. We all want to spoil our dogs and cats by giving them tasty treats and people food, especially when they give us "the look." But those calories add up quickly



**and they usually don't have much nutritional value. Let's face it: do we let our human children have ten candy bars a day? Hopefully not, it is bad for them. So why would we give our pet a high calorie treat every time they do something cute or beg? Too much of the wrong foods and treats will ultimately lead to obesity. Besides diet, there are a few other issues that may contribute to weight gain in a dog or cat. Some breeds are genetically predisposed to put on the extra pounds. Dog breeds include Labrador retrievers, miniature schnauzers, dachshunds, shelties, cocker spaniels, beagles and basset hounds. However, any breed that is overfed and not active enough to burn the calories it is consuming can become obese.**



**Cats that are primarily indoors are more likely to be obese due to less exercise. New studies have shown that spaying and neutering an animal may reduce energy needs by about 25%. Most puppies and kittens are neutered or spayed at about 6 months, which is a time when their growth also slows down. These metabolic changes combined can have a dramatic impact on their energy requirements. A medical problem, such as hypothyroidism could also play a role in a pet's weight gain. A thorough examination by your veterinarian and some simple blood work can rule out a medical condition before your pet starts a weight loss plan. However, if your pet is diagnosed with a disease that has caused weight gain, then proper treatment can be implemented.**


## Weight Loss Programs for Pets

You may already know if your pet is overweight, but there are many people that do not realize their pet is gaining weight or becoming overweight. Dr. Flanary should examine your pet to determine if your pet is overweight and, if so, tell you what your pet's healthy weight should be. Your pet may also need to be checked for underlying medical conditions, such as hypothyroidism, before starting a weight loss program. Regular health checkups and weight checks will ensure your dog or cat's weight loss program is going well. When starting a weight loss program for your pet, remember you are not just changing their food, you are changing your relationship with your dog or cat. Begin slowly and steadily increase changes.



- **Diet Change**
  - **Reducing the amount of food in your pets meals will help pets that are slightly overweight.**
  - **Divide the pets diet into several small meals throughout the day.**
  - **If you have a pet that begs at the table keep raw baby**

### Dog Translator

Snacks fed to a 20lb dog	Human Equivalent*	
	Number of Hamburgers	Number of Chocolate bars (2oz.)
 1 small cookie		
 1oz. cheddar cheese	 	 
 1 hot dog	 	 

### Cat Translator

Snacks fed to a 10lb cat	Human Equivalent*	
	Number of Hamburgers	Number of Chocolate bars (2oz.)
 1 potato chip		
 1oz. cheddar cheese	  	  
 1 cup milk	  	  

\*An average woman

**carrots, green beans or Lean treats with you to feed your pet instead of table scraps.**

- **Make sure all family members know what and how much the pet should be eating at meals and treat time.**



- **If you are not seeing results with reducing the food portions you may consider a specialized weight loss food. Prescriptions diets such as r/d and w/d are specially formulated to take the weight off dogs and cats without causing them to feel hungry.**

***BONUS: During the month of January patients can get a \$15 rebate with any bag of Science diet weight loss food!!***

- **Increasing Activity Level**

- **Walking is an excellent activity for dogs and is great for cats who are leash trained.**
- **When walking is an option playing for 10-15 minutes can be very beneficial. Toss the ball or toy for the pet to chase for create a climbing area for cats. Feather teaser toys are also a great option for cats.**



- **Feeding your pet in different places so he/she has to hunt for the food bowl will help them get some extra activity as they have to “work” before eating.**
- **Everlasting treat toys can be implemented to make a meal/treat last longer and keep the pet active while eating. Simply fill the ball with the proper amount of food or treat and allow the dog to roll it around getting a small amount of food each time.**



- **Get Tough of Treats**

- **Treat calories add up fast and should be included in the pet’s daily calorie limit.**
- **Many treats do not contain much nutrition but are high in calories.**
- **The total treats a pet receives should be less than 10% of the pets total calorie intake.**
- **A variety of low calorie treats are available for you pets such as Science Diets Lean Treats. Flanary Vet Clinic does stock Lean Treats for cats and dogs.**
- **Try replacing some treats with green beans or raw baby carrots.**



**Here is a treat calorie table for some of the popular treats on the market:**

<b>Treat</b>	<b>Fat (g)</b>	<b>Calories</b>
<b>Milkbone</b>	<b>.3</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Beggin strips</b>	<b>.6</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Snausages</b>	<b>.6</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Meaty Bone (medium)</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Science Diet Light treats</b>	<b>.3</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Pounce cat treats</b>	<b>.13</b>	<b>3.7</b>
<b>Whisker Lickin's cat treats</b>	<b>.12</b>	<b>3.</b>

**We at Flanary Veterinary Clinic sincerely wish all of you a new year filled with good health and prosperity. We have always strived at Flanary Veterinary Clinic to be state of the art in the care we give your pets, however, we also strive to be state of the HEART and put compassion into the care we give. Become a friend of the clinic on Facebook (Flanary Veterinary Clinic) or a friend of Dr. Flanary in order for us to develop a better relationship. We look forward to your feedback. We hope you will accept our invitation in 2012 to become part of the Flanary Vet- Pet Family!!!**



**Sincerely,  
LaNita S. Flanary DVM**

**For More information on Weight loss Visit  
our website [www.flanaryvet.com](http://www.flanaryvet.com)**