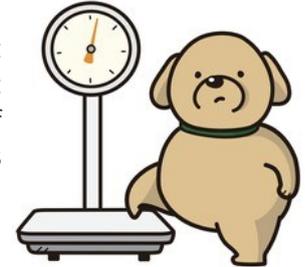


Why Obesity is Bad

Obesity has become an extremely important health problem in the Western world, not just for humans but for dogs and cats as well. Obesity in pets is associated with joint problems, diabetes mellitus, respiratory compromise, and decreased life span. A lot of pet owners underestimate their pet's body condition, in part because overweight pets are so common that an overweight body condition now seems to be normal. We can assure you that there is nothing normal about being overweight.



Arthritis

An over-weight animal has extra unneeded stress on joints, including the discs of the vertebrae. This extra stress leads to the progression of joint degeneration and creates more pain. Weight management decreases and can even eliminate the need for arthritis medications. The problem is compounded as joint pain leads to poorer mobility, which in turn leads to greater obesity.

Respiratory Compromise

An obese pet has a good inch or two of fat forming a constricting jacket around the chest. This makes the pet less able to take deep breaths as more work is required to move the respiratory muscles. Areas of the lung cannot fully inflate, so coughing results. The pet also overheats more easily. Many cases of tracheal collapse and chronic cough can be managed with only weight loss.

Diabetes Mellitus

Extra body fat leads to insulin resistance in cats just as it does in humans. In fact, obese cats have been found to have a 50% decrease in insulin sensitivity. Weight management is especially important in decreasing a cat's risk for the development of diabetes mellitus.

Hepatic Lipidosis

When an overweight cat goes off food or partially off food because of illness or psychological stress, body fat is mobilized to provide calories. Unfortunately, the cat's liver was not designed to process a large amount of body fat. The liver becomes infiltrated with fat and then fails. A stress that might have been relatively minor, such as a cold, becomes a life-threatening disaster.

Reduced Life Span

A study of age-matched Labrador retrievers found that dogs kept on the slender side of normal lived a median of 2.5 years longer than their overweight counterparts.

Unwillingness to Accept Therapeutic Diets

If the pet should develop a condition where a therapeutic diet is of great benefit, the pet that has been maintained primarily on a diet of table scraps may be unwilling to accept commercial pet food of any kind, much less a food modified to be beneficial for a specific disease process. This unwillingness will hamper treatment.

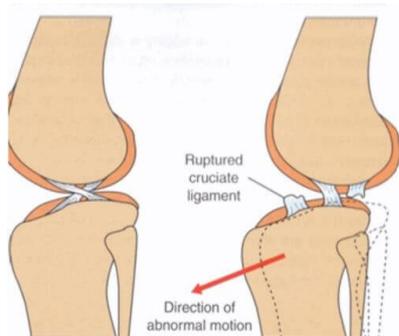
What to do about it?

Your vet will check something called a body condition score (BCS) which uses several landmarks on the animal's body. Rather than just a straight weight or appearance (especially with longer haired breeds), the BCS relies on manual touch to determine if a patient is under or overweight. Based on their determined BCS, your vet may recommend feeding more or less food. A specific caloric target can be calculated, and if the caloric density of the food is known, this can then be translated into an amount. Measuring out your pets' food is one of the easiest ways to consistently give the correct amount. Don't forget to account for any treats (including dental chews and bones!) Although it can be tough when your pet begs for food, it is in their best interest. Tough love will help keep your pet healthier and happier in the long run.

Cruciate Disease– the most common cause of sore knees in dogs.

Throughout the history of small animal orthopaedic medicine, one condition has time and time again showed itself to be the most common, cranial cruciate ligament disease.

The cranial cruciate ligament is a band of tissue that runs through the middle of the knee joint, between the thigh bone (femur) and the shin bone (tibia). It serves to stop the tibia from sliding forward against the femur when the knee takes weight during walking.



When the ligament is ruptured the weight bearing force during walking pushes the tibia forward and causes it to slide and nearly pop off the front of the femur. This is usually rather painful for the dog causing it to avoid using the leg.

This is usually caused by a chronic, low grade inflammation in the joint brought on by a slight deformity in the knee.

Surgery is required to correct this issue. At Vetco we are able to provide two surgical options. Traditionally we have used a lateral fabellar suture. This essentially places a piece of nylon line in the knee to replace the ruptured ligament. This is a good option for smaller dogs and those with a limited budget. It can mean that your dog will have more lameness in the medium to long term when compared to other options but it is much better than no surgery.

The second option we are now able to offer is a tibial plateau leveling osteotomy or TPLO. This surgery rotates the top of the tibia in a way that alters the bone geometry in the knee. This alteration means that when the dog bears weight there is no longer a force pushing the tibia forward meaning the knee remains stable and comfortable. The TPLO is generally considered to be the gold standard of cruciate disease treatment as it gives the best use of the leg in the medium to long term.



New Zealand Birds



The takahē is a flightless bird and the largest living member of the rail family. Discovered by Europeans in 1847 but hunted for centuries, it was considered extinct by 1898. Then, to everyone's surprise, living takahē were rediscovered in

Fiordland in 1948. The striking swamp-hens are now a protected species.

The New Zealand wood pigeon, known as the kereru is a large bird with a distinctive white vest as well as lustrous green feathers on its head. Unlike many native birds, the kereru are not endangered – you can find them in any place with forested areas nearby. Its wings are known for making quite a loud whooshing sound that resonates around New Zealand's native bush.



Christmas/New Year Hours

Vetco Edendale and Kennington clinics will be closed on the following days:

Christmas Statutory Days.....25th, 26th, 27th, 28th
December 2021

New Year Statutory Days..... 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th
January 2022

If you require Veterinary Services while our clinics are closed please follow the usual after hours procedure which is dial the listed clinic number. Your call will be automatically diverted to the cell phone of the duty veterinarian. After dialing the clinic number there is a pause while the call is diverted, please wait while the call is being connected.



KENNINGTON CLINIC - 11 CLAPHAM ROAD (03) 230 4689
EDENDALE CLINIC - 14 SWEENEY STREET (03) 206 6170

