



CARLA MURPHY
BVMS MRCVS
&
MELANIE BROAD
BVMS MRCVS

Border Vets Fit Pets

As promised, this month we are going to talk about something which affects over one third of adult dogs and cats – **OBESITY!** Technically, obesity is recognised as a body weight of 20% (or higher) above the ideal. So for an average 4Kg cat, 4.8Kg could be considered obese, or for a typical 20Kg dog like a spaniel, 24Kg would indicate that we should be doing something to beat the bulge. To put that in to context, for a person whose ideal weight is 10stone then crossing the 12stone limit would put you into the obese category. A recent study followed two groups of Labrador dogs through their life. The first group were allowed to eat as much as they wanted (although they were restricted when they became moderately overweight) and the second group had their food restricted to 75% of what group 1 ate. The results were quite shocking. The slim dogs lived an average of two whole years longer (average 14 compared to only 12). Not only that but the overweight dogs suffered from chronic diseases like arthritis and heart disease much earlier; typically 2-3 years earlier. I think our pets don't live long enough as it is but wouldn't it be great if we could all do something simple which would give our pets an extra two years freedom from illness and two extra years of life expectancy?

Border Vets are launching our **Fit Pets** club in July. We are inviting our clients to come along for a **free** weight and body condition score check. When you register, you will get a support pack which includes a weight chart to monitor your progress and a feeding guide which is exactly tailored to your pet. To get you off to a great start we are offering 10% off Purina Obesity Management food for cats and dogs. It is tasty, will satisfy your pet's hunger and comes with a 100% satisfaction guarantee or you money back. In December our star slimmer will win a prize!

Top Tips for getting your pet back in shape

1. Recognise your pet is overweight – bring them in for a free weight and body condition score check.
2. Set yourself a realistic target. We usually aim for gradual loss over 6-12 months.
3. Ask for advice on feeding. Feeding twice daily rather than once, with the main meal in the morning will help to raise your pet's metabolic rate.
4. Exercise – two half hour walks are better for shedding the pounds than one 1 hour walk. Encourage play behaviour with your cat or dog. Try feeding your pet upstairs or feed your cats up high so they have to jump up.
5. Monitor your progress regularly to see how well you are doing. Join in and weigh yourself too .

We hope to see you soon. Next month we're having a focus on caring for older pets. Staggeringly, in the 5-10 year old category for dogs and cats, the proportion that is obese rises to 50%! Not surprising then that many of the problems we'll discuss with older pets can be prevented by weight management.

Mel

Galashiels Veterinary Surgery
 Gala Terrace, Galashiels. TD1 3JT
01896 752 156

Office: Weekdays 8.30 - 6pm, Sat 8.30 - 12noon
Consulting times:
 Weekdays 9 - 10am and 5 - 6pm, Sat 9 - 11am