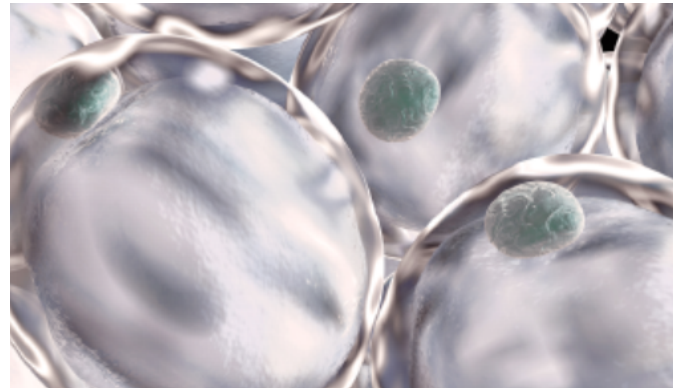




**Excess Body Weight**

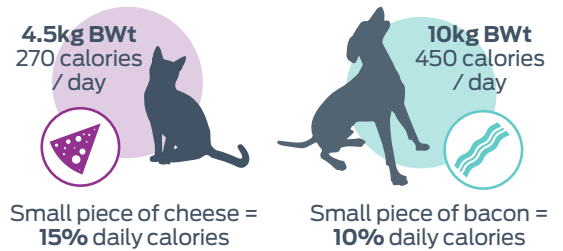
# THE ROLE OF DIET IN MANAGING EXCESS WEIGHT



A tailored nutritional approach can help overweight or obese pets lose weight.

**Key Messages**

- Calorie restriction based on the pet’s goal (ideal) weight is key to achieving weight loss, i.e., less calories consumed than used.
- Feeding a commercial weight loss diet offers complete and balanced nutrition while helping a pet lose weight.
  - Commercial weight loss diets provide all the nutrients the pet needs in the right amounts and balance while providing fewer calories.
- Measuring the food can help ensure successful weight management. Weigh scales are the most accurate but measuring cups are also useful.
  - Measuring the food reinforces this is the only food the pet should eat.
  - When feeding dry kibbles, they can be divided into both meals with a portion used as treats.
- Since pets do not have identical maintenance energy requirements, each pet will respond differently to a weight loss diet.
  - Body Condition Score and weight should be monitored so that the amount of food can be adjusted if needed.
- If additional treats are fed, they should not exceed 10% of a pet’s daily caloric intake.
  - The quantity of the main meal food should be reduced to account for the treats. Treats can contain a surprising amount of calories.
- In multi-pet households, overweight pets should be fed separately and should not have access to other pets’ bowls.



**Additional Resources**

Lafamme, D. P. (2006). Understanding and managing obesity in dogs and cats. *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice*, 36, 1283–1295.

The Purina Institute aims to help put nutrition at the forefront of pet health discussions by providing user-friendly, science-based information that helps pets live longer, healthier lives.