

Thank you for participating in the National Pet Obesity Awareness Day study. This study will allow the veterinary profession to more accurately assess the current pet overweight and obesity situation. To complete the study, we are asking that you obtain some simple information on each cat and dog over one year of age that presents to your clinic on October 14, 2009 for routine procedures such as annual examinations, vaccinations and so forth. It is important that you are consistent with selecting all types, breeds and sizes of pets to include in the study. One of the primary concerns for a study such as this is that the participants will unintentionally record only the overweight or obese pets and fail to capture data on normal to thin pets. Be sure to record data on all of the pets you see for simple, routine procedures on this single day to give an accurate representation of the pet population.

Study Kit

Instruction Sheet
One Tape Measure
Three Data Sheets

Three Additional Questions Sheets (new!)
Self-addressed Stamped Return Envelope

Study Instructions

1. Complete the study data sheet enclosed. If you need additional copies, you can download them at www.PetObesityPrevention.com/awareness_day.htm.
2. Be as thorough as possible when recording pet information.
 - a. **Breed** – For mixed breeds, record the primary breed or if small (0-20 lbs. ideal weight), medium (20-50 lbs. ideal weight), large (50-80 lbs. ideal weight), or extra-large (over 80 lbs. ideal weight). I.e. “large Lab mix” or “small terrier mix”
 - b. **Age** – round to nearest quarter year (0.25 – i.e. a dog 1 year 8 months would be recorded as 1.75). Of course, you may not know the exact age of a pet; round to the closest approximation possible.
 - c. **Owner Assessment of Weight** – ask the client to classify their pet’s weight as thin, normal, overweight or obese. *It is important that you have not given them an indication of size or Body Condition Score (BCS) prior to asking this question.* Tell the client there is no “right” or “wrong” answer to this question.
 - d. **Body Condition Score** – You may refer to the chart found at www.PetObesityPrevention.com/weight_check.htm for details on BCS.
 - e. **Weight** – round to nearest tenth (0.1) of a pound.
 - f. **Length** – Measure from the front of the skull (at the base of the nose or muzzle) to the base of the tail. This is best accomplished by extending the neck forward. This is to represent approximately how “tall” a pet would be if it were standing upright. A video demonstrating how to obtain these measurements can be found at www.youtube.com/petobesityprevention.
 - g. **Thoracic Circumference** – measure the widest point of the chest. This is generally found halfway between the back of the elbow (approximately the fourth intercostal or rib space) and the last rib.
 - h. **Waist Circumference** – Measure the waist by finding the midway point between the last rib and the greater trochanter of the femur (point of the hip). Be sure not to cinch the tape measure tightly, especially in cats.
 - i. **Previous Medical Conditions** – Record conditions such as arthritis, heart disease, periodontal disease, chronic skin infections, etc. We are primarily interested in any long-term, chronic or serious medical conditions.
3. **Additional Questions**
 - a. We would like to gather as much data on feeding and exercise habits as possible. If you are able, simply ask the questions on the Additional Questions Sheet” after you complete the study data sheet. This should only take an additional one to two minutes. This information will give us a better understanding of why pets are becoming more overweight. Remember there are additional monetary prizes for clinics collecting the most additional data.

Thank you and feel free to call me or Gina Toman at 910-579-5550 or email Gina@SeasideVet.com or DrWard@PetObesityPrevention.com.