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**Thank you** for participating in the Fifth Annual National Pet Obesity Awareness Day study. This study will allow the veterinary profession more accurately assess the current state of pet overweight and obesity.

To complete the study, we are asking that you obtain basic information on each cat and dog over one year of age that presents to your clinic on October 12, 2011 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. **If you are unable to complete the study on Wednesday, you may complete it any day the week of October 10–16, 2011.**

**We have greatly simplified the study.** We are primarily asking for owner's assessment of their pet's weight, the pet's weight and your BCS scoring.

Copies of body condition score (BCS) handouts may be found on the website.

#### **Study Instructions**

1. Complete the study data sheet enclosed. If you need additional copies, you can download them at <http://www.petobesityprevention.com/pet-weight-check/>.
2. Be as thorough as possible when recording pet information.
  - **Pet's Name**
  - **Dog (D) or Cat (C)**
  - **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).
  - **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.
  - Sex – Male (M), Female (F), Male Neutered (MN) or Female Spayed (FS)
  - **Total Number of Pets in Household – Dogs and Cats** – if they have exotic pets you'd like to list, add in "Previous Medical Conditions" column.
  - **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.
  - **Body Condition Score** – You may refer to the chart found at <http://www.petobesityprevention.com/pet-weight-check/> for details on BCS. **Please use only whole numbers (1 to 5 not 3.5, etc).**
  - **Weight** – round to nearest tenth (0.1) of a pound.
  - **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.

#### **To return completed forms:**

by fax: 910-579-1671

by email: [DrWard@SeasideVet.com](mailto:DrWard@SeasideVet.com)

by mail: APOP 9256 Beach Drive, Calabash, NC 28467

Please return forms no later than October 31, 2011. If you need additional time or would like to conduct the study on a different day, please contact me at [DrWard@SeasideVet.com](mailto:DrWard@SeasideVet.com).

Thanks again for your help. Your efforts are beginning to turn the tide in the war against obesity-related illness and death.

Dr. Ernie Ward

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