

## PET CORNER



Cymen Moss

Obesity is a serious condition thought to affect as many as 50-60% of all dogs and cats. Risk factors for obesity in pets have not been well studied, but it is thought to be most commonly associated with overfeeding, feeding human table scraps, and an overall lack of exercise. Obesity can negatively impact an animal's life, making them more susceptible to arthritis, heart and lung disease, hypertension, diabetes, and some forms of cancers.

When questioned, 40% of pets who were considered obese by their veterinarian were not considered obese by their owners. How do you know if your pet is obese? A simple at home test is to run your fingers over your pet's rib cage and waistline. If you cannot easily feel the ribs and your pet does not have a defined waistline then he/she is probably obese.

Depending on the breed of dog or cat, they may age 5-7 times faster than we do. A large breed dog who has been overweight for 2 years may be equivalent to a human being obese for 14 years! Keeping this in mind, a preventative health check to discuss nutrition, health, and exercise is a great idea in any pet. Remember: the best way to deal with any disease is to prevent it.

*Jarrod R. Moss, D.V.M.*  
*Author and Clinical Veterinarian*  
[www.audibleachievements.com](http://www.audibleachievements.com)

