**Body Condition Score (BCS) for Cats**

1. **Very Thin**
   - 30%+ under ideal weight
   - Ribs, spine and hip bones are visible (coat may interfere with visibility)
   - Fat can not be seen or felt under the skin
   - Obvious loss of muscle mass

2. **Thin**
   - Ribs, spine and hip bones are visible (coat may interfere with visibility)
   - Fat can not be seen or felt under the skin
   - Obvious loss of muscle mass

3. **Ideal**
   - Ribs, spine and hip bones are easily felt and may be visible (coat may interfere with visibility)
   - A waist and abdominal tuck are seen when viewed from above and side
   - Fat can be felt around ribs, spine and hip bones

4. **Overweight**
   - Ribs, spine and hip bones are not visible and difficult to feel
   - Excess fat is felt around ribs, spine and hip bones
   - Waist and abdominal tuck are minimal or absent

5. **Obesity**
   - Ribs, spine and hip bones are difficult to feel under a thick layer of fat
   - Waist and abdomen distended when viewed from above and side
   - Prominent fat deposits over lower spine, neck and chest


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Body Condition Score (BCS) is a screening tool used to evaluate body fat accumulation in an animal. Body condition scores are most accurate when performed by a trained professional.

Determining the BCS of cats is different than dogs. Cats have a normal "primordial pouch" of sagging skin on their belly. This may be accentuated in certain cats.

Cat owners often underestimate their cat’s ideal or healthy body condition.

If excess fat accumulation and obesity are unrecognized, untreated, or unmanaged, it can lead to many weight-related health problems, including decreased life expectancy, chronic pain, and poor quality of life.

What is a Body Condition Score (BCS)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Weight-Related Diseases in Cats</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Diabetes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Kidney disease</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Hypertension</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Bladder &amp; urinary tract disease</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Arthritis &amp; osteoarthritis</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Respiratory disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cancer</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Heart disease</td>
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<td>• Liver disease</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reproductive disease</td>
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<td>• Skin disease</td>
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<td>• Blindness (high blood pressure)</td>
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Awareness & Recognition

Obesity is a complex disease influenced by several factors, including genetics, medical conditions, caloric intake, diet and feeding habits, physical activity, and general lifestyle.

A human-animal-family treatment approach works best if your cat has been identified as over their ideal body condition.

Develop a nutritional management, exercise, and medical plan with your veterinarian and pet healthcare team.

Next steps vary depending on the medical assessment and immediate health needs and risk factors for your cat.

- Identify & treat any underlying medical conditions
- Calculate daily caloric needs
- Select a diet
- Create a healthy feeding & treat program
- Feed cats separately
- Aim for 15 minutes of daily physical play & activity
- Weigh monthly
- Involve the entire family

The Association for Pet Obesity Prevention (APOP) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the awareness, prevention, and treatment of pets with obesity and weight-related disorders. We are committed to making the lives of dogs, cats, all other animals, and people healthier and more vital.

www.petobesityprevention.org