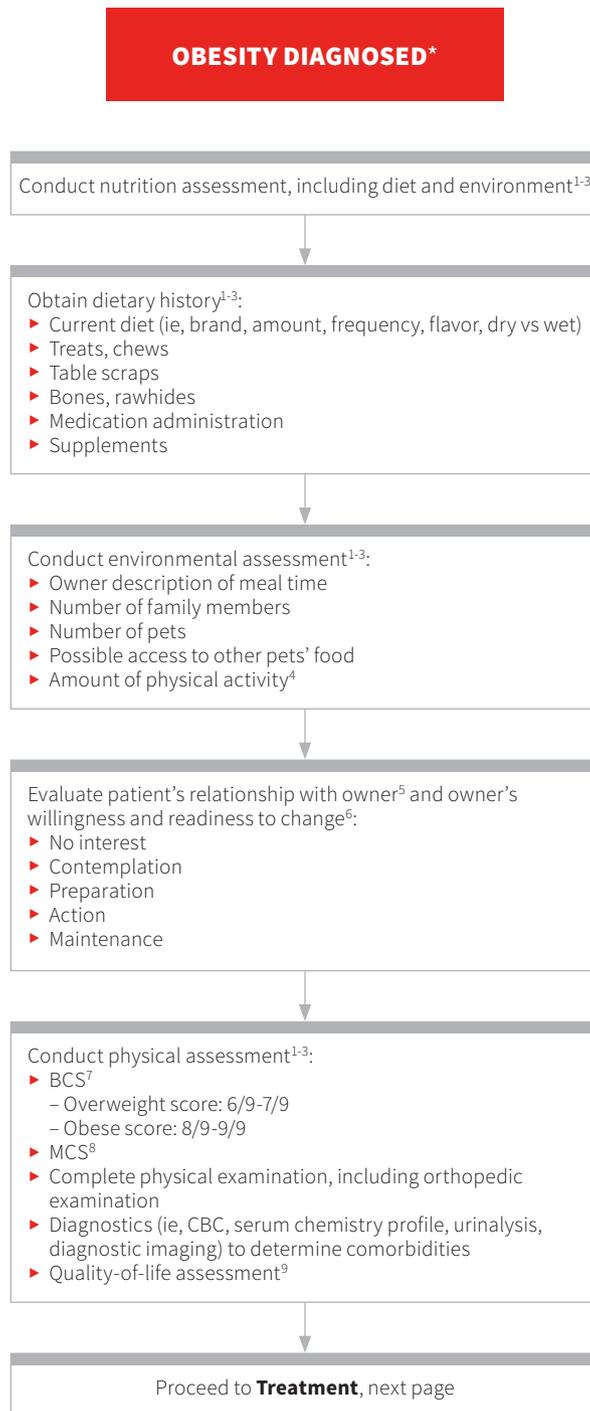


Obesity in Dogs

Deborah E. Linder, DVM, MS, DACVN
 Tufts University



*The AAHA Weight Management Guidelines define obesity as having a BCS 8/9 or above,¹ although the guidelines, as well as this algorithm, may be helpful for any pet that is above ideal body weight.

MCS = muscle condition score

TREATMENT

Design a weight-loss program that includes¹:

- ▶ Ideal body weight (IBW)
- ▶ Calorie restriction
- ▶ Diet selection
- ▶ Treat allowance
- ▶ Feeding strategies
- ▶ Activity plans
- ▶ Behavior strategies
- ▶ Monitoring and follow-up

Determine target weight with owner¹:

- ▶ Check medical record for previous IBW and/or BCS
 - Consider that each whole BCS change above 5 (on a 9-point scale) or half of a BCS change above 3 (on a 5-point scale) equals approximately 10% overweight
- ▶ Use IBW or alternate goal as target weight based on medical history (eg, comorbidities) and owner expectations/readiness to change

Set initial caloric restriction¹

Caloric intake known

Caloric intake unknown

Feed 80% of current caloric intake

Feed 80% of RER based on target weight
 $0.8 \times 70 (\text{target weight}_{\text{kg}})^{0.75}$

Select a diet^{1,10}

- ▶ Consider veterinary therapeutic diet if:
 - Patient has >20% of body weight to lose
 - Comorbidities are present
 - Patient requires <80% RER to lose weight
- ▶ Nutrient profile considerations¹¹⁻¹³:
 - Appropriate calorie density (dry food, <3100 kcal/kg; wet food, <950 kcal/kg)
 - Protein levels (>2.5 g/kg of body weight, or ≥ 6 g per 100 kcal of diet if restriction is 80% RER)
 - Increased fiber for satiety, if patient is tolerant and owner can provide frequent walks
- ▶ Canned diet, if greater satiety from increased moisture is desired and if a more cost-effective diet is a client consideration

Create treat allowance plan with owner¹:

- ▶ $\leq 10\%$ of daily caloric intake
- ▶ Include medication administration
- ▶ Include non-negotiables
- ▶ Consider compromises if adherence is a concern

IBW = ideal body weight
 MCS = muscle condition score
 RER = resting energy requirement



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Encourage active lifestyle^{1,4}:

- ▶ Walks
- ▶ Food-dispensing toys
- ▶ Chase balls or treats
- ▶ Underwater treadmill
- ▶ Agility course
- ▶ Active play or walking
- ▶ Obedience classes

FOLLOW-UP

Develop monitoring plan with owner¹:

- ▶ Weigh-ins every 2-4 weeks
- ▶ Determine adherence
 - Revisit diet history
- ▶ Record body weight, BCS, MCS
- ▶ Calculate rate of weight loss
 - Aim for 1%-2% of body weight/week
- ▶ Slow rate of weight loss if:
 - Rate >2%/week
 - Comorbid condition
 - MCS decreases at all (ie, there should be no palpable muscle wasting)
- ▶ Reduce caloric intake by 10% if:
 - Owner is adherent and rate is <1%/week

Troubleshoot with owner in cases of^{1,5}:

- ▶ Begging behavior
 - Try autofeeders
 - Try increased fiber for satiety
- ▶ Multipet households
 - Separate pets with baby gate or by room
 - Try microchip reader feeders (ie, devices that only allow access to pets by scanning microchip)
- ▶ Weight-loss plateau
 - Increase physical activity
 - Consider food with lower calorie density
- ▶ Owner guilt/emotional concerns⁵
 - Discuss concerns with open-ended questions
 - Brainstorm treatment strategies with owner
 - Consider all members of household
 - Discuss alternatives to *food is love* method of care
 - Walking, grooming, interactive play

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