



ACTIVE  
ANIMAL REHABILITATION AND FITNESS INC.

# CANINE OBESITY

## A Preventable Health Risk

### WHY YOUR DOG'S WEIGHT MATTERS



- **More than half (54–59%) of dogs in North America are overweight or obese.** Excess body weight significantly increases the risk of chronic disease, joint pain, and reduced lifespan (World Pet Obesity Association).
- Maintaining a healthy body condition is one of the most important steps in protecting long-term health. A landmark longitudinal study demonstrated that dogs maintained at an ideal body condition lived **approximately 1.8 years longer** than their overweight littermates (Kealy et al., 2002).

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## IS MY DOG OVERWEIGHT?

Veterinarians use a Body Condition Score (BCS) scale from 1-9 to assess a dog's body fat and muscle condition.

### **Ideal (4-5/9):**

Ribs easily felt with light pressure  
Visible waist from above  
Abdominal tuck from the side



### **Overweight (6-7/9):**

Ribs difficult to feel  
Minimal waist  
Mild abdominal sag



### **Obese (8-9/9):**

No visible waist  
Significant fat deposits over ribs and spine  
Reduced stamina and mobility



## HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH OBESITY

**Excess body weight increases the risk of:**

Osteoarthritis

Cranial Cruciate Ligament (CCL) injury

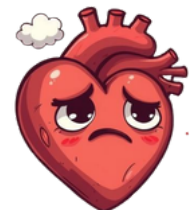
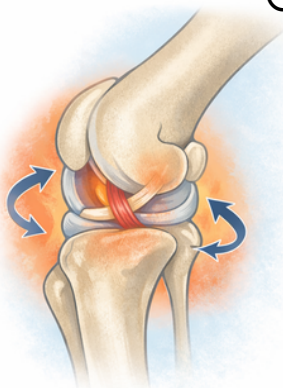
Intervertebral Disc Disease (IVDD)

Diabetes mellitus

Cardiovascular disease

Respiratory compromise

Heat intolerance



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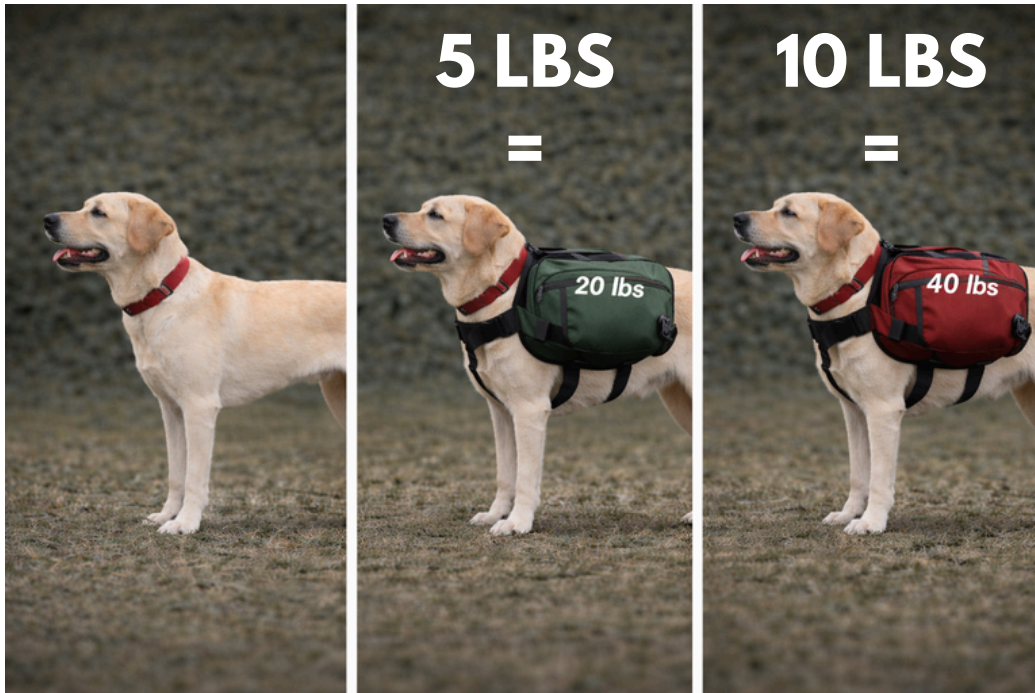
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## JOINT STRESS: THE 1:4 RULE

For every 1 pound of excess body weight, a dog's joints may experience **up to 4 pounds of additional force** during activity. Even small weight gains can significantly impact mobility and comfort.



## SAFE WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Healthy weight loss should be gradual: **1-2% of body weight per week.**

### Recommended strategies:

Precisely measure daily food portions

Implement consistent exercise routines

Limit treats to less than 10% of total daily calories

Follow a veterinary-guided nutritional plan

**Book an appointment today to create a personalized weight management plan and improve your dog's quality of life.**

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