

Information Sheet



ARDEN GRANGE
nutrition without compromise

HELPING YOUR PET LOSE WEIGHT

By Ness Bird RVN

INTRODUCTION

Taking steps to actively address and resolve a weight problem will help to improve your pet's health and well-being, and ensure that there is less stress on the joints, circulation and other vital bodily tissues, organs and systems.

CAUSES OF WEIGHT PROBLEMS

Animals become overweight if their calorie intake exceeds that which the body requires to maintain condition and provide energy. Physiological, genetic and environmental factors may also play a part. Identifying the reason or combinations of reasons for the problem in the first place means that the necessary life-style changes can be made to help prevent a recurrence.

Age	Obesity is more common in geriatric pets as there is a tendency for lean muscle mass to fall and adipose tissue to accumulate with age.
Sex	Obesity is more frequently seen in female animals.
Neutering	Obesity is twice as common in spayed or castrated pets than in entire animals.
Metabolism	Some animals have a naturally slow metabolism; in others metabolic rate is reduced due to inactivity and / or inappropriate diet.
Appetite	Some animals have a naturally voracious appetite or inadequate satiety signals; others may experience polyphagia (increased appetite) as a result of drugs such as steroids.
Social Pressure	Competition at meal-times in multi-pet households can result in over-eating.
Lack of Mental Stimulation	Bored or frustrated animals will frequently eat more; if food is unavailable they will seek inappropriate material including rubbish, plants and faeces.
Lack of Exercise	Insufficient exercise may result in the energy intake exceeding the output; inactivity can then lead to boredom / frustration and slow down the metabolic rate. Indoor cats are at higher risk.
Diet	Feeding in excess of a pet's nutritional requirement is the primary cause of obesity; this may be as a result of feeding high volumes of the animal's regular diet (especially if free-feeding), high calorie human food, excessive volumes of treats or feeding home prepared diets where it is difficult to assess the nutritional value and feeding guidelines are absent.
Owner Psychology	Owners may often misinterpret their pets' behaviour and assume that they may be hungry when contact is initiated.



VETERINARY ADVICE

Before putting your pet on a diet, it is important to first seek the advice of your vet. Some animals may be overweight as a result of a medical condition, certain drugs or rare genetic defects; and therefore it is important to rule out clinical problems beforehand. Many practices run free nurses' clinics / diet clubs and will be able to help you weigh your cat or dog with accurate scales, advise of your pet's optimal weight, set achievable targets and provide motivation and support.



ARDEN GRANGE™
nutrition without compromise

HELPING YOUR PET LOSE WEIGHT CONT...

By Ness Bird RVN

It is essential to discuss any plans to change your dog's diet with your veterinary surgeon beforehand, since this may not be advisable during the crucial first stages of treatment in case it causes a digestive upset. When customers approach us at Arden Grange for advice in such cases, we will provide samples and full details of foods which may be suitable and advise that the owner take these into the surgery so that the animal's vet can assess the ingredients and analysis and decide whether or not the diet is appropriate for the individual patient. Appetite may be affected by treatment, so you may need to choose a higher or lower energy density feed depending upon your dog's response to any drug therapy. Steroids typically make dogs very hungry, whilst chemotherapy can suppress the appetite.

Illness will often manifest in anorexia in animals, and you will know yourself that when you feel unwell, a large plate of food is probably the last thing on your mind. Dogs with a suppressed appetite may benefit from an energy dense food such as the **Arden Grange Prestige** as the subsequently smaller feed portions are often more acceptable to dogs with a low appetite. The **Arden Grange Partners Chicken** canned food for dogs is also an excellent appetite stimulant and contains high volumes of meat.

The type of cancer may also influence the choice of food. Cats and dogs suffering from oral tumours for example may have difficulty with dry kibble and would find wet food or soaked kibble better digested. Some animals may have concurrent medical conditions necessitating special dietary management. Cats and dogs with cancer may thrive better on small frequent meals rather than one or two bigger ones. This means that the digestive system has less work to do at any one time, as well as helping to keep the digestive enzymes ticking over efficiently and promoting more stable blood sugar levels. Together, these benefits may improve the pet's metabolism.

IDENTIFYING OVERWEIGHT & OBESE PETS

OVERWEIGHT = A pet who is up to 15% heavier than the optimal weight for the species, breed, sex and age. An overweight pet will show an increase in fat over the ribs, a slightly rounded abdomen, flank folds hanging down with a moderate amount of fat visible and a noticeable jiggle when walking.

OBESE = A pet who is more than 15% heavier than the optimal weight for the species, breed, sex and age. An obese animal's ribs and backbone are not easily felt under a heavy fat covering. A rounded abdomen with the waist just visible to absent, and prominent flank folds which sway when walking are evident.

There are various means that vets employ to establish the degree that a pet is over-weight:

Measurement of Body Weight – Comparison against breed standards.

Body Condition Scoring – Assessment of visual and palpable characteristics that correlate subcutaneous fat, abdominal fat and superficial musculature (e.g. ribcage, dorsal spinal processes and waist).

Morphometry – The measurement of form in relation to body composition analysis (measurement of skin fold thickness, dimensional evaluations and body condition scores).

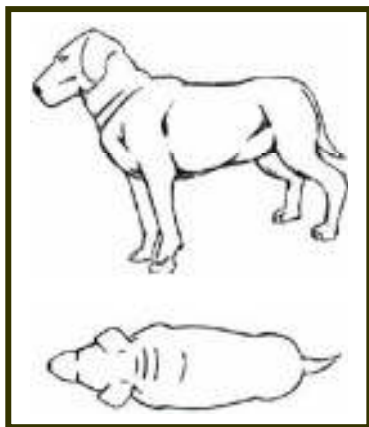
Although subjective, **hand and eye** can be very helpful in determining the degree of a weight problem. There are some drawbacks: - cross-bred animals have no breed standard, and working animals are likely to have a larger muscle mass and thus heavier body weight. This approach also allows a lot of scope for individual judgement.



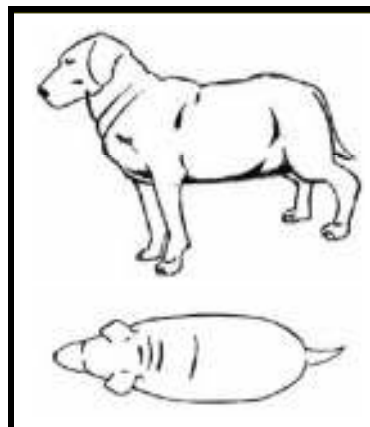


HELPING YOUR PET LOSE WEIGHT CONT...

By Ness Bird RVN



OVERWEIGHT



OBESE

Once a pet becomes obese, a vicious cycle often develops. The extra weight means that many animals have difficulty exercising because of the adverse effects on locomotion, heart function and respiration. Obese animals have a slower metabolic rate, and their individual “set point” for body weight is higher than it should be. This makes achieving and maintaining weight loss difficult once obesity is established. Breaking the vicious cycle requires diet, exercise, stimulation and motivation.

PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH OBESITY

Endocrine and metabolic diseases	Diabetes mellitus Hypothyroidism Hyperadrenocorticism (Cushing’s Disease) Insulinoma
Orthopaedic disorders	Fractures Cruciate damage Intervertebral disc disease Degenerative joint disease
Cardiorespiratory disease and hypertension	Heat stroke Tracheal collapse in small dogs Laryngeal paralysis Brachycephalic airway obstruction syndrome Irregular heart rhythm
Urinary tract and reproductive disorders	Urinary incontinence Urinary crystal formation Difficult births
Cancer	Mammary tumours Bladder tumours
Skin disorders	Scurf/matting (due to inability to groom properly) Pressure sores Dermatitis within fleshy skin folds
Compromised Immunity	Obese animals have less resistance to disease and thus are at greater risk from viral and bacterial infection





ARDEN GRANGE™
nutrition without compromise

HELPING YOUR PET LOSE WEIGHT CONT...

By Ness Bird RVN

SUCCESSFUL WEIGHT LOSS WITH THE ARDEN GRANGE LIGHT DIETS



If you are feeding a commercial dry cat or dog food and want to attain weight loss, you would need to feed only about 60-75% of the amount suggested for the pet's desired weight rather than actual weight. This can represent a considerably lower volume of food, which may not be very satisfactory. For this reason, lower calorie Light diets are a great solution.

The Arden Grange Light food has been very successfully used for many dieting pets and is available in both a canine and feline recipe. These diets are economical, convenient, palatable and digestible. Like the other products in the Arden Grange range, they include no wheat, beef, soya or dairy products (which are 4 of the most common ingredients responsible for dietary allergies and intolerances in dogs and cats). They are also free from artificial colourings, flavourings and preservatives.

The lower fat content in these recipes means that the Light Food is lower in calories than our standard adult recipes and therefore your pets can eat a reasonable volume, which is a benefit for those with a large appetite. The feeding guidelines also include a weight reduction as well as a weight maintenance chart to help you establish the correct daily allowance.





ARDEN GRANGE™
nutrition without compromise

HELPING YOUR PET LOSE WEIGHT CONT...

By Ness Bird RVN

BENEFITS OF THE ARDEN GRANGE LIGHT DIETS

- ♥ **LOWER FAT** – Fewer calories.
- ♥ **ADDED L-CARNITINE*** – May help to increase the conversion of fat to energy and maintain lean body mass.
- ♥ **CAREFULLY SELECTED CARBOHYDRATES** – Rice and corn to help maintain stable blood sugar and good serotonin levels. Serotonin is the hormone responsible for dietary satisfaction.
- ♥ **BEET PULP AS THE FIBRE SOURCE** – Slows the rate of food passage through the gut ensuring preferential transit time of the food leading to maximum digestion and absorption of nutrients. The soluble fibre is a good source of prebiotics, and the insoluble fibre helps an animal to feel satisfactorily full.
- ♥ **HIGHLY DIGESTIBLE FAT SOURCES** – When fat is restricted, it is important that this nutrient is of the highest quality so that what is present is easily utilised. Salmon oil and poultry fat are used, plus added Omega-3 and Omega-6 essential fatty acids at the correct ratio. The Omega-3s may be of particular benefit to the obese pet who is at greater risk of heart conditions and inflammatory joint disease.
- ♥ **HIGHLY DIGESTIBLE PROTEIN SOURCES** – Obese pets still require adequate nutrition for survival at appropriate levels. A variety of high quality protein sources is ideal and ensures an excellent amino acid profile (thus supplying all of those essential building blocks that the body needs to support its extensive structural and functional demands). The Light recipes include poultry, fish and egg all of which are excellent protein sources for dogs and cats.
- ♥ **BIOFLAVONOID PLANT EXTRACTS AND ANTIOXIDANT VITAMINS & MINERALS** – These may help to combat the harmful effects of free radicals from which the obese pet is more at risk. They may also reduce the risk of cancer and age-related degeneration.
- ♥ **NUCLEOTIDES** – These natural proteins derived from yeast allow optimal levels of nutrients to be absorbed by the body, as well as facilitating a more rapid cell replication in response to an outside challenge. They may be of particular benefit to the obese pet since studies prove that they enhance metabolic function.
- ♥ **ADDED PREBIOTICS FOS & MOS** – An excellent food source for the friendly bowel flora. They may also help to limit the growth of pathogenic bacteria and thus enhance immunity within the gastrointestinal tract as well as improve the utilisation of the nutrients.
- ♥ **ADDED GLOUCOSAMINE, CHONDROITIN & MSM** – These supplements are included at a boosted level to provide protection and relief from joint problems that may have arisen secondary to obesity.

* Canine recipe only





ARDEN GRANGE™
nutrition without compromise

HELPING YOUR PET LOSE WEIGHT CONT...

By Ness Bird RVN

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Weigh your cat or dog using accurate scales. You can then (with the help of your vet) establish what weight is optimal. Ensure that your pet has a clean bill of health prior to beginning the weight management plan. Record the starting weight and target weight on your chart (included at the end of this fact sheet).

Record all of the food your pet usually eats (be honest!) over a three day period. You can then look to see where reductions can be made. By all means, continue to reward your cat or dog for good behaviour, but you must ensure that any treats given are healthy and nutritious so you don't end up undoing all your good work. All treats should be worked for. Don't forget to reduce the volume of the main feed volume accordingly to allow for any extra calories in the additions.

Just like with people, it is far better to **establish a healthy eating plan** that is going to be easy to maintain long-term rather than try to make dramatic changes which usually result in losing the weight too quickly and then finding it creep back on once things revert to normal. Life-style changes are better than diets for both people and pets; and these sustainable changes to the daily routine will help promote long-term good health.

Decide whether you are going to cut down the existing diet, or change to the Arden Grange Light product (and/or Partners canned food for dogs). If you are unsure of the amount to feed, please feel free to contact Arden Grange and we can calculate your pet's metabolic energy requirement and the subsequent calories and feed volume needed to help him or her lose weight steadily and healthily.

Make sure all the family are on board. It's important that everyone in the household appreciates that these changes are being made to benefit the health of their much loved family pet. They won't be doing the cat or dog any favours slipping treats or extra meals down.

Undertake the changes gradually. This will give the digestive system time to cope with any new ingredients and the new nutrient balance if you are changing the food. This will also enable the stomach to shrink slowly and prevent hunger. Dramatic reductions in the calorie intake are not recommended as this can not only result in a very unhappy pet who may start indulging in antisocial behaviours such as begging, bin raiding and coprophagia (stool eating), but also slow the rate of metabolism making weight loss more difficult.

Set achievable short-term goals to meet along the way to the target weight. Make sure you keep the weight chart up to date. As you monitor your pet's progress you should also start to notice a visible improvement to the bodily condition, better exercise tolerance and a more alert and happy cat or dog.

Feed small, frequent meals. Three or even four small feeds per day rather than one or two bigger meals are often helpful for the dieting pet as this will help to stabilise the blood sugar and promote good serotonin levels. We commonly know serotonin as the "happy hormone" but it is also responsible for dietary satisfaction. Promoting good serotonin levels can help to prevent hunger when a pet is eating less calories. Because the gut has to do less work at any one time, and the digestive enzymes are kept ticking over efficiently; small frequent feeds may also help to improve the metabolism and ensure maximum benefit is derived from the nutrients in the food. This is very important when a pet is on a restricted calorie weight management plan. The additional feed times add interest to the day too. Use a smaller bowl; the feed portions won't look as little so this can be psychologically advantageous for the humans helping with the weight management plan.





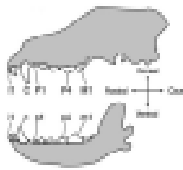









HELPING YOUR PET LOSE WEIGHT CONT...

By Ness Bird RVN

EXERCISE

Exercise is an important part of obesity management and will help to burn calories and increase the resting metabolic rate. Care must be taken with obese or very unfit animals, particularly if these pets suffer from medical conditions related to their excess weight. Little and often is the way forward, and gradual increases to the daily exercise will reduce the risk of fatigue and injury. Swimming at a hydrotherapy pool (with expert supervision) is an excellent means of exercise for obese dogs. Even cats can be encouraged to exercise! Why not place the feed bowl at the top or bottom of the stairs (if you have them) so that your cat has to go up or down them before eating. Cat nip is a great way to get most cats moving. Play-time is both physically and mentally stimulating for your pet, so be sure to invest in some new and interesting toys to keep up interest.

HIGH CALORIE AND / OR LOWER NUTRITIONAL VALUE	LOW CALORIE AND /OR HIGHER NUTRITIONAL VALUE
 <p>Popular cereal based dog biscuit 82 calories (large size).</p>	 <p>Arden Grange Light Crunchy Bite biscuit 33 calories.</p>
<p>Popular teeth cleaners 77 calories per piece (medium size).</p> 	<p>Arden Grange Light already contains natural antioxidants to help promote good oral health No extra calories!</p> 
 <p>Pigs' ears are primarily composed of indigestible protein and those that are fried contain a lot of additional calories.</p>	 <p>A small apple contains just 55 calories, and is a fibrous and vitamin-rich snack (a small dog won't need a whole one).</p>
<p>Raw hide chews are of limited nutritional value and may hinder the digestion & reduce the efficiency of the metabolism.</p> 	<p>A medium carrot contains only 25 calories and again is fibrous and vitamin-rich.</p> 
 <p>Left-overs can contain a surprising amount of calories and it is difficult to assess exactly how many.</p>	 <p>Home made low salt chicken or fish stock frozen into a hollow toy makes a tasty, low calorie and long-lasting snack. Best for outside as messy!</p>













HELPING YOUR PET LOSE WEIGHT CONT...

By Ness Bird RVN

CHOOSING HEALTHY SNACKS & TREATS FOR YOUR CAT

HIGH CALORIE AND / OR LOWER NUTRITIONAL VALUE	LOW CALORIE AND /OR HIGHER NUTRITIONAL VALUE
 <p>Popular commercial cat treats are often full of sugar.</p>	 <p>Dried fish skins are a lower calorie, longer lasting & healthier alternative (in moderation).</p>
<p>Commercial dental care diets can be costly in terms of £ and calories.</p> 	<p>Arden Grange Light already contains natural antioxidants to help promote good oral health. No extra calories!</p> 
 <p>Commercial cat treats often contain unspecified meats and cereals.</p>	 <p>Home made low salt chicken or fish stock frozen into ice cube trays make a tasty, low calorie snack – ideal for summer.</p>
<p>Left-overs can contain a surprising amount of calories and it is difficult to assess exactly how many.</p> 	<p>Use portion control – if you want to give your cat a little lean fresh meat or fish, weigh it & calculate the calories, ensure the main diet is reduced.</p> 

TOP TIPS

Many vets do like to see over-weight cats and dogs fed a prescription diet. Some vets favour the traditional approach; i.e. low fat high fibre diets that ensure satisfaction. Others prefer an approach more akin to Dr Atkins – high protein and low carb. The Arden Grange Light recipes are quite simply lower calorie than our regular feeds.

If your vet does feel that your pet would benefit from a higher fibre diet, then you can safely add a proprietary supplement (make sure you use one made especially for pets, as human supplements such as bran can be very difficult to dose correctly) to the Arden Grange Light. The reason the fibre content in our feed is not particularly high is due to the differing requirements of dogs and cats for this nutrient. Too much can be as detrimental as too little and result in constipation or loose stools.

Higher protein feeds are available, and for dogs (especially those with larger appetites), we would recommend feeding these at a significantly lower volume and supplementing them with a little of our Partners canned food. This is available in 3 flavours - chicken, lamb and tripe. Any wet food is always going to be a lot lower calorie than dry due to the much greater moisture content in the former.





ARDEN GRANGE™
nutrition without compromise

HELPING YOUR PET LOSE WEIGHT CONT...

By Ness Bird RVN

This means it's a good way to add some volume and interest to mealtimes without too many extra calories. Partners can be used in conjunction with any of the canine recipes. When using it alongside the Light dog food, we suggest following the "weight loss" guidelines on the Light food packaging, but to reduce the daily amount by 40g for every ¼ of a can fed. When using a combination of any other Arden Grange recipe with Partners you" need to feed a little less than the volume suggested for the dog at his or her desired weight, reducing this again by 40g for every ¼ can fed. Don't forget, we can always help you with feeding volumes if you need some more specific guidance.

Unfortunately Arden Grange do not yet manufacture wet cat food. To increase the protein level for cats fed on the Arden Grange Light, you can add some low fat nutritious fresh food such as white fish (e.g. coley, haddock, Pollack) to a reduced volume of the Light diet or one of our other feline recipes. Again, we can help you calculate the calories and incorporate this into your cat's weight management plan.

WEIGHT RECORD CHART

NAME:	START WEIGHT:	TARGET 1:	TARGET 2:	FINAL TARGET:
--------------	----------------------	------------------	------------------	----------------------

DATE	WEIGHT	NOTES

IMPORTANT NOTE

As a responsible and ethical company, Arden Grange fully appreciates the caution that must be taken when discussing the potential benefits of our diets and the natural supplements included within them. Whilst our Light diets and suggestions made may be beneficial in helping overweight pets lead a healthier life-style, we must emphasise that they are not a substitute for professional advice from your veterinary surgeon.

For more information about the Arden Grange Range, please contact:

Tel: +44 (0) 1273 833390

Email: enquiries@ardengrange.com

Copyright © Ness Bird RVN for Arden Grange, Leander International Pet Foods, May 2011

