

## Care of Obese Cats

The optimum treatment of an obese cat consists of two main components:

- Diet (high protein, low carbohydrate canned or raw diet) – possibly limited portions
- Exercise (interactive toys, etc.)

For more information, please visit  
[www.felineoutreach.org](http://www.felineoutreach.org).



Feline Outreach Inc. is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of the care of companion animals, specifically cats.

The information contained is for general informational purposes only, and is no substitute for your own research or the advice of a veterinarian.

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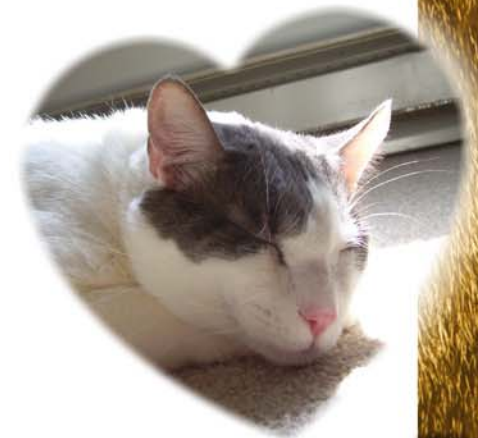
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# *Tubby Tabby*



## Treatment of Feline Obesity





## Diet

Obviously, diet is a primary reason cats become obese, and a primary means of combating it. Research now indicates that the high-fiber low-calorie “Lite” foods are not as effective at treating obesity as high-protein low-carbohydrate wet diets. Studies showed cats lost more weight, maintained more muscle mass, and kept weight off better on a low-carbohydrate canned diet than a “Lite” one.

The low-carbohydrate dry foods are not effective, as they are very high in calories. Studies of low-carbohydrate dry foods indicated they were not effective at promoting weight loss.

A typical 3 oz can of cat food contains about 100 calories. By contrast, a typical adult dry food contains 150 to 250 calories per half cup, contains less protein and is less filling.

## Portion Control

Portions may need to be limited in order to facilitate weight loss. If your cat is currently eating some dry or Lite food, eliminate that first. If weight loss does not occur, portion sizes may need to be limited. Most cats need 6 to 8 ounces of canned or raw food daily. The amount may vary by the size, age, and activity level of the cat.

Never let your cat go without eating more than 24 hours. Fatty liver disease (hepatic lipidosis) can occur if a cat does not consume its daily requirement of protein, and can be life-threatening if not treated quickly. Obese cats are especially at risk for fatty liver disease.

One rule of thumb targets weight loss of 1% to 1.5% total weight lost per week. Weight loss may occur more quickly at first, especially if previously on a dry food diet, but ensuring your cat eats enough food to meet its daily protein requirements is imperative.

## Exercise

Try to play with your cat for several minutes each day. Interactive toys, such as “wand toys” are a good way to get your cat moving.

## Finally

There have been many advancements in understanding the epidemic of obesity in our cats today. Where once the only recommendation for helping our cats lose weight was to limit their portions and resist their pleas for more, we now know the type of food can be as important or more important than how much we feed.

Often, the best thing we can do for our chubby kitty is to eliminate all dry kibble from their diet.

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