

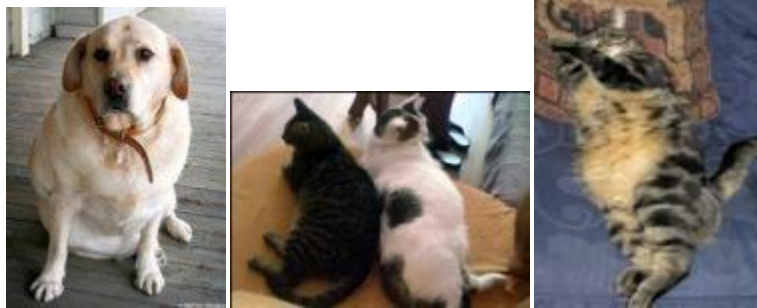
## Melanie's blog- January 2011

*There is just more to love:*



Now that the festive season is over, we start looking at our waistlines again. Think about those New Year resolutions. The same can be said of our furry cutie pies at home. I am very lucky in that I have a skinny dog that eats and eats and runs neurotically around the house and always looks undernourished. Not so with the cats. Just a few extra biscuits per day and the slight beer belly is back.

We are always amazed at Park Veterinary Centre how many animals come in overweight, it's pretty much in line with the overall population as unfortunately we all are carrying around a spare set of love handles.



Now just to put things into perspective, a normal size cat is usually about 4 kg. If that cat carries around an extra 2lbs ( 1 kg) that means a healthy 4 kg cat is carrying around 25% extra bodyweight at 5 kg. Your average normal healthy adult weighs about 70kg. Try running after the bus with a suitcase weighing 17 kg for a whole day! My husband's suitcase when he travels abroad for just a week usually weighs about 19 kg, not comfortable to carry really. So we are giving our little beloved pets a heck of a lot to carry around (and that is not to take into consideration the usual consequences on heart/joints etc.)

My favourite story to tell clients coming into our practice in Watford is about a study done by Purina several years ago. 48 Labrador puppies were split into 2 groups, one group was fed normally and one group under fed or lean fed. The underfed group lived on average 2 years longer! And arthritis onset was also delayed by 2 years. Now some of us think we would rather live shorter lives eating what we want than longer lives living healthily. Fine, that is a decision we make for ourselves but as pet owners isn't it our responsibility to look after our pets as best as we can do? And let's face it, I don't fancy carrying around my husband's suitcase all my life!



So how do we do it?

Yes less is better when eating but I hate being on a diet and hate feeling hungry. And I don't enjoy food that comes in children's portions.

So bulk up! You can easily feed the same amount to your pet but give it fewer calories, if necessary come and see Carol at our practice in Cassiobury Drive, she runs the ever so popular weight clinics and they are free! Weight watchers for dogs and you don't have to stand on the scales in front of everybody!