

Roly Poly Rover

By Young Rhee



It is estimated that 60-75% of the pet population is overweight or obese. As with humans, overweight dogs are more prone to health problems and in general, do not live as long as dogs that are trim. The health risks associated with being overweight or obese are as follows:

- Diabetes mellitus
- Increased risk of heart and coronary disease
- Joint problems such as arthritis
- Pancreatic disorders
- Liver disease
- Difficulty in breathing due to excess fat in the chest
- Decreased endurance and stamina
- Heat intolerance
- Increased surgical and anesthetic risk
- Digestive problems

The following guideline should help you determine if your dog may be overweight:

- Run your hand along your dog's side. You should be able to feel each rib under a slight coating of fat. If you can't feel them at all, then the dog is overweight.
- Look at your dog from above. There should be a definite waist behind the ribs. If there is no waist, or worse yet, the area between the ribs and hips is wider than the hips or ribs, then the dog is grossly overweight.
- Again, look at your dog from the side. Your dog should have an abdominal tuck (the area behind the ribs should be smaller in diameter than the chest). If not, then your dog is likely overweight.



Ideal weight



Overweight

If you feel that your dog is overweight or you are unsure, please consult your veterinarian. He/She can determine if there are any medical problems before starting a

weight reduction program. Also, your veterinarian can suggest various diets, how fast your dog should lose weight, etc.