

## Is Your Dog at a Healthy Weight?

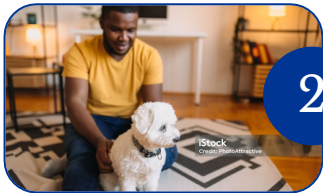
It's not always easy to tell if your dog is carrying extra pounds that could impact their overall health and vitality. Sometimes, the signs aren't obvious—and that's okay! If you're concerned about your dog's weight, the best first step is to connect with your veterinary care team. Your vet can provide expert insight and help determine whether your dog is at a healthy weight.

In the meantime, there are a few simple at-home checks you can do to get a better sense of your dog's condition. This guide will walk you through what to look for.



### Rib Check

Gently run your fingers along your dog's side. A healthy-weight pet will have a thin layer of fat over the ribs and spine that you can feel but not see.



### Waist Check

Looking at your pet from above, your dog should have a visible waist behind the ribs that tapers slightly towards the hips with a slight indentation near the midsection. If your pet does not have a visible waist or has a bulging waist, they may be overweight.



### Tummy Test

Standing next to your pet, look at them from the side. If the abdomen hangs low and appears bulging or sagging, it could indicate excess abdominal or "belly" fat.

## Still Unsure? That's Okay!

If you've gone through this assessment and are still unsure about your dog's weight—or you suspect they might be carrying a few extra pounds—don't worry. Just like with people, there are safe, effective ways to help your pup reach and maintain a healthy weight.

Start by talking with your veterinary care team—they can offer personalized advice and guidance. You can also take steps at home to support your dog's wellness, such as:



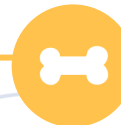
### Nutrition

Feed your dog a balanced, portion-controlled diet, made with nutritious ingredients that are tailored to their needs.



### Exercise

Regular exercise, like daily walks or active play sessions, helps burn calories and keep your dog physically fit.



### Healthy Treats

Look for dog treats that are low in calories, made with natural ingredients, and free from added sugars or artificial fillers.

Helping your dog maintain a healthy weight is one of the best things you can do to support your dog's quality of life. Simple checks and everyday choices can go a long way. For more tips and updates and to support the latest health research for dogs, visit [akcchf.org/educational-resources](https://akcchf.org/educational-resources).