

Weight Loss

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Overview

Weight loss is a physical condition that results from a negative caloric balance. This usually occurs when the body uses and/or excretes essential nutrients faster than it can consume them. Essentially more calories are being burned than are being taken in. Weight loss is considered clinically important when it exceeds 10 percent of the normal body weight and is not associated with fluid loss.

There are numerous causes of weight loss including anorexia, poor digestion, poor absorption of nutrients, metabolic disorders, neuromuscular diseases, heart disease and cancer.

Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- Weight loss is typically diagnosed through history and physical examination findings. It is important to confirm that weight loss has occurred through a review of the pet's previous body weights. Determining the cause of the weight loss requires further testing such as bloodwork, abdominal x-rays, abdominal ultrasound, urinalysis and fecal examinations.
- Treatment depends on the underlying disorder causing the weight loss, severity of the disease, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. Supportive treatments may include force-feeding, appetite stimulants, vitamin/mineral supplementation, or in severe cases, temporary intravenous nutrition for those animals that cannot take food orally. Discuss additional treatment details when your pet is evaluated and the underlying condition causing weight loss is diagnosed. .

What to Watch for*:

- Proven weight loss
- Loss of body condition/muscle mass
- Poor hair coat
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting

- Regurgitation
- Difficulty swallowing

** Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!*