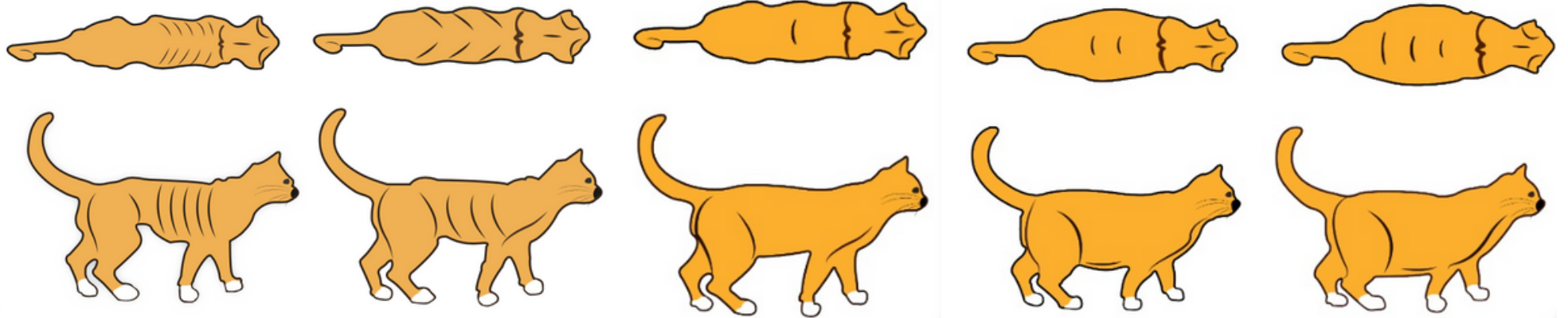


# Body Condition Score (BCS) for Cats



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

## Very Thin

20%+ under ideal weight

- Ribs, spine and hip bones are visible (coat may interfere with visibility)
- Fat can not be seen or felt under the skin
- Obvious loss of muscle mass

## Thin

- Ribs, spine and hip bones are visible (coat may interfere with visibility)
- Fat can not be seen or felt under the skin
- Obvious loss of muscle mass

## Ideal

- Ribs, spine and hip bones are easily felt and may be visible (coat may interfere with visibility)
- A waist and abdominal tuck are seen when viewed from above and side
- Fat can be felt around ribs, spine and hip bones

## Overweight

- Ribs, spine and hip bones are not visible and difficult to feel
- Excess fat is felt around ribs, spine and hip bones
- Waist and abdominal tuck are minimal or absent

## Obesity

30%+ over ideal weight

- Ribs, spine and hip bones are difficult to feel under a thick layer of fat
- Waist and abdomen distended when viewed from above and side
- Prominent fat deposits over lower spine, neck and chest

# Weight Management for Body Condition Score 7 – 9

The number of pets that are overweight or have obesity (BCS 6–9) continues to increase in the U.S. and globally. Obesity is a complex, multifactorial disease that requires early recognition and intervention to achieve a healthy body condition, prevent secondary medical problems, extend longevity, and improve quality of life.

## What is a Body Condition Score (BCS)?

### Body Condition Score (BCS)

is a screening tool used to evaluate body fat accumulation in an animal. Body condition scores are most accurate when performed by a trained professional.

Determining the BCS of cats is different than dogs. Cats have a normal "primordial pouch" of sagging skin on their belly. This may be accentuated in certain cats.

**Cat owners often underestimate their cat's ideal or healthy body condition.**

If excess fat accumulation and obesity are unrecognized, untreated, or unmanaged, it can lead to many weight-related health problems, including decreased life expectancy, chronic pain, and poor quality of life.

## How does excess body weight affect my cat's health?

### Common Weight-Related Diseases in Cats

- Diabetes
- Kidney disease
- Hypertension
- Bladder & urinary tract disease
- Arthritis & osteoarthritis
- Respiratory disease
- Cancer
- Heart disease
- Liver disease
- Reproductive disease
- Skin disease
- Blindness (high blood pressure)

## Why is my cat overweight or has a high BCS?

### Awareness & Recognition

Obesity is a complex disease influenced by several factors, including genetics, medical conditions, caloric intake, diet and feeding habits, physical activity, and general lifestyle.

**A human-animal-family treatment approach works best if your cat has been identified as over their ideal body condition.**

**Develop a nutritional management, exercise, and medical plan with your veterinarian and pet healthcare team.**

## What can I do to help my cat achieve & maintain an ideal body condition?

**Next steps** vary depending on the medical assessment and immediate health needs and risk factors for your cat.

- **Identify & treat any underlying medical conditions**
- **Calculate daily caloric needs**
- **Select a diet**
- **Create a healthy feeding & treat program**
- **Feed cats separately**
- **Aim for 15 minutes of daily physical play & activity**
- **Weigh monthly**
- **Involve the entire family**

The Association for Pet Obesity Prevention (APOPOP) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the awareness, prevention, and treatment of pets with obesity and weight-related disorders. We are committed to making the lives of dogs, cats, all other animals, and people healthier and more vital.

[www.petobesityprevention.org](http://www.petobesityprevention.org)

