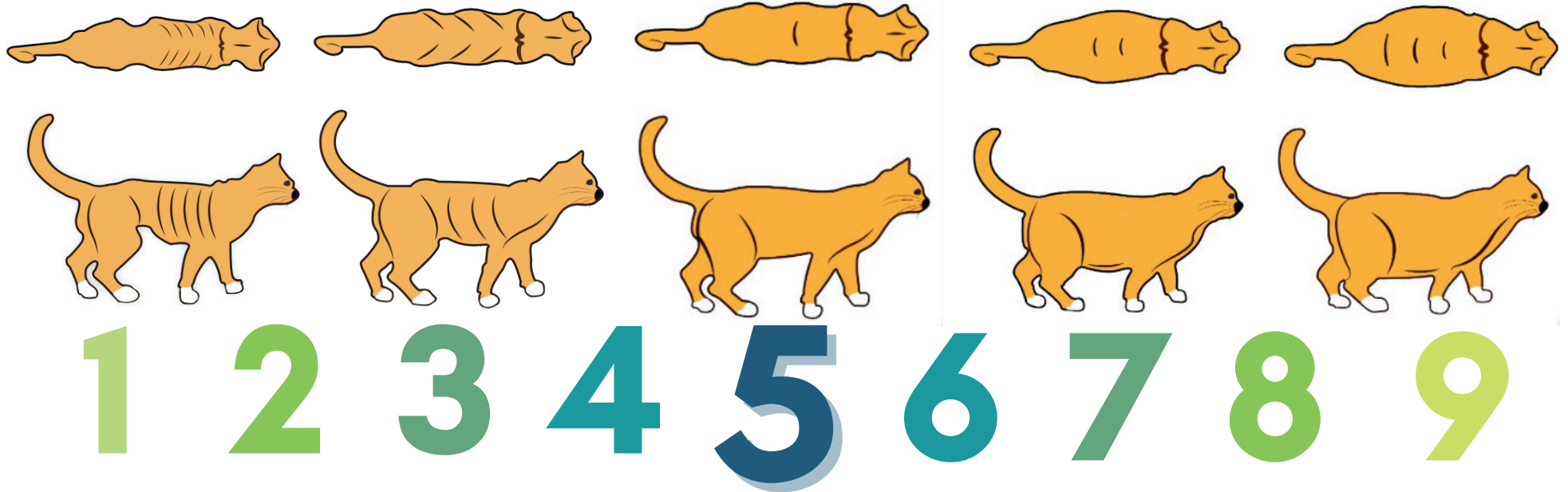


Body Condition Score (BCS) for Cats



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 6 – 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 charitable nonprofit 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

