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Helpful Hints for Cat Weight Loss

Your pet needs to come into the clinic every month for a weight check. There are several good reasons to do this:

- If you know the vet will find out your pet's weight you are more likely to stick to the feeding plan. (This works in people too, Weight Watcher's, for instance)
- Your pet's diet plan can be "tweaked" for optimal, safe weight loss
- Your pet gets used to riding in the car and coming to the vet without anything painful or frightening happening.

Meal feeding allows portion control and individual weight loss diet selection. Diets that are high in protein and low in carbohydrates, with adequate vitamins and minerals cause more effective weight loss in cats. These diets tend to decrease appetite as cats are satisfied more easily and for longer with protein. There are 2 very good prescription foods that work well for most overweight cats, Purina DM and Hill's M/D.

Other approaches to try are:

- Putting the free-choice food up high (on a counter) where the overweight cat cannot get to it (they tend to be quite resourceful and driven however so you need to watch and see if this really works!);
- Putting the free-choice diet in a cat carrier and cutting a silhouette in the entrance so the overweight cat not get into the cage (doesn't work if you have large thin cats and small overweight cats);
- Putting a cat door that opens with a cat collar sensor between two areas of the house, then giving only the thin cats a collar that allows access to the area that has the ad-lib food.
- Hide the cat's food around the house in small quantities. Put the bowl upstairs if he normally is down. Use yogurt cups or plastic pop bottles with holes poked in them and put the food inside (divided and measured and a calculated portion of the cat's daily ration) with holes punched in them to force him to "work" to get some of his food. It takes the animals longer to get the food out and keeps them distracted instead of begging. Be certain the cat is finding and eating his food. We don't want to make him sick by not eating every day. You might need to isolate the overweight cat for this if there are other cats in the house; 20 minutes usually is adequate time for a motivated cat to easily finish 1/8 cup of "puzzle-ball" delivered food.

I hope that these ideas make sense and help. If you need further help please call the clinic and we will be happy to help you.