

**Thank you** for participating in the Tenth Annual National Pet Obesity Awareness Day study. This survey will allow the veterinary profession to better understand the current state of pet obesity in the U.S.

To complete the study, we are asking that you obtain basic information on each cat and dog over one year of age that presents to your clinic on October 12, 2016 for routine procedures such as annual examinations, vaccinations, dentistry, boarding, grooming, minor medical complaints, and so forth. It is important that you are consistent with selecting all types, breeds and sizes of pets to include in the study. One of the primary concerns for a study such as this is that participants will unintentionally record only the overweight or obese pets and fail to capture data on normal to thin pets. Be sure to record data on all of the pets you see for simple, routine procedures on this single day to give an accurate representation of the U.S. pet population.

**If you are unable to complete the study on October 12, you may collect data on any day during October 2016. You may also include multiple days if your schedule and caseload permits. The more data we collect, the more accurate our analyses.**

**We have greatly simplified the study.** We are primarily asking for owner's assessment of their pet's weight, the pet's weight and your BCS scoring.

Copies of body condition score (BCS) handouts may be found [here](#) on the website.

### **Study Instructions**

1. Complete the study data sheet enclosed. If you need additional copies, you can download them [here](#).
2. Be as thorough as possible when recording pet information.
  - **Pet's Name**
  - **Dog (D) or Cat (C)**
  - **Breed** – For mixed breeds, record the primary breed or if small (0-20 lbs. ideal weight), medium (20-50 lbs. ideal weight), large (50-80 lbs. ideal weight), or extra-large (over 80 lbs. ideal weight).
  - **Age** – round to nearest quarter year (0.25 – i.e. a dog 1 year 8 months would be recorded as 1.75). Of course, you may not know the exact age of a pet; round to the closest approximation possible. Only include pets over 1 year of age (adults).
  - **Sex** – Male (M), Female (F), Male Neutered (MN) or Female Spayed (FS)
  - **Total Number of Pets in Household – Dogs and Cats** – if they have exotic pets you'd like to list, add in "Previous Medical Conditions or Comments" column.
  - **Owner Assessment of Weight** – ask the client to classify their pet's weight as **Thin, Normal, Overweight** or **Obese**. *It is important that you have not given them an indication of size or Body Condition Score (BCS) prior to asking this question.* Tell the client there is no "right" or "wrong" answer to this question. We are interested in their perception of their pet's current body condition.
  - **Body Condition Score** (1 to 5 whole numbers only) – You may refer to the charts found [here](#) for details on BCS. **Please use only whole numbers (1 to 5 not 3.5, 4.3, etc.).**
  - **Weight** – round to nearest tenth (0.1) of a pound.
  - **Previous Medical Conditions or Comments** – Record conditions such as arthritis, heart disease, periodontal disease, chronic skin infections, etc. We are primarily interested in any long-term, chronic or serious medical conditions or complications related to excess weight.

### **To return completed forms:**

by fax: 910-579-9613

by email: [DrErnieWard@gmail.com](mailto:DrErnieWard@gmail.com)

by mail: APOP PO Box 6343, Ocean Isle, NC 28469

**Please return forms no later than November 7, 2016.** If you need additional time, please contact me at [DrErnieWard@gmail.com](mailto:DrErnieWard@gmail.com).

**Thank you again for your help.** Your efforts are helping turn the tide in the war against obesity-related illness and death.

Dr. Ernie Ward