



From the Field shares insights from Banfield Pet Hospital veterinary team members. Drawing from the nationwide practice's extensive research, as well as findings from its electronic veterinary medical records database and more than 8 million annual pet visits, this column is intended to explore topics and spark conversations relevant to veterinary practices that ultimately help create a better world for pets.

FROM THE FIELD

Focus on Overweight and Obesity in Cats

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In the last *From the Field* column, Banfield Pet Hospital reported on dog-specific findings from our recently released 2017 *State of Pet Health Report*, which highlights a widespread trend of overweight pets nationwide. When we looked at medical records from the more than 500,000 cats cared for at Banfield hospitals in 2016, we found that felines are faring even worse than their canine counterparts with an **increase of over 169%** over the past 10 years in overweight cats.

The top five states with the highest prevalence of overweight cats included Minnesota (46%), Nebraska (43%), Iowa (42%), Idaho (40%) and Delaware (39%).

States with the Most Obese Cats

The top five states with the highest prevalence of overweight cats included

Minnesota	46%
Nebraska	43%
Iowa	42%
Idaho	40%
Delaware	39%

Find out how your state ranks at stateofpethealth.com.



The prevalence estimates for each state are listed on stateofpethealth.com. How did your state do?

Here are some tips and tricks for talking with your clients about their cat's weight:

- **Prevention is key.** Have cat-friendly strategies in place in your hospital. This will help create a less stressful atmosphere for your feline patients and will encourage pet owners to bring their cats in for regular check-ups and nutritional counseling, which can help keep their cats at a healthy weight. There are some great resources on cat friendly practices through the American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP). Strategies include:
 - Designate separate areas for cats in the waiting and treatment areas
 - Provide a cat-only exam room
 - When possible, complete procedures in the exam room
 - Consider providing a hiding place for the cat by utilizing kennel covers (when medically appropriate)
 - Use calming pheromone sprays or diffusers
 - Brush up on feline and low-stress handling techniques

- **Show, don't tell.** Oftentimes, it is difficult for cat owners to recognize that their pet is overweight. This may be due to the distribution of fat on a cat's body, the amount of fur present, or misconceptions about ideal weight. A graphic of body condition scoring (**FIGURE 1**) can be a useful tool as you have these conversations.
- **Give treats in moderation.** Advise clients to take note of how many treats they give their cat per day. Treats should not make up more than 10% of a cat's daily caloric consumption.
- **Encourage exercise.** Getting cats to exercise can be a challenge. Determining the right strategy is important—even increasing exercise by 10 minutes every day can have a positive impact on a cat's overall well-being. Some options include:
 - Using a laser pointer
 - Playing with a feather toy; or
 - Increasing mealtime activity by dividing meals into multiple dishes and placing throughout the house. **TVP**



Kirk J. Breuninger

Kirk J. Breuninger, VMD, MPH, is a member of the Banfield Applied Research and Knowledge (BARK) team, where he performs and disseminates research that contributes to advancing medical quality, patient safety, and medical decision making. He received his veterinary degree from University of Pennsylvania and his Master of Public Health degree from Temple University. He is an inaugural member of the AVMA Early Career Development Committee, was awarded the 2009 George B. Wolff Legislative Leadership Award, and was recognized as the 2015 Pennsylvania Veterinarian of the Year by the Pennsylvania Veterinary Medical Association.



View the State of Pet Health

For more client education tools, as well as a host of other resources, visit stateofpethealth.com.

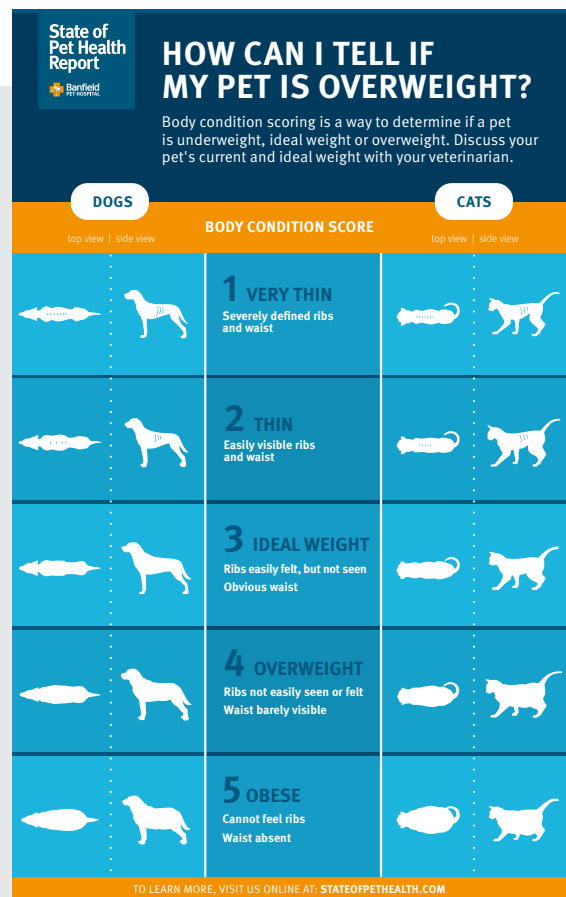


FIGURE 1. 2016 overweight prevalence in cats.



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FDA approved and veterinarian recommended

BRAVECTO® Chew and Topical Solution for Dogs are approved for pregnant, breeding and lactating dogs.^{1,2,5,6}

BRAVECTO® is also approved for use in dogs 6 months of age or older who weigh at least 4.4 pounds.^{1,2}

BRAVECTO® Topical Solution for Cats is approved for cats and kittens 6 months of age and older and weighing 2.6 pounds or greater.³

Veterinarians recommend year-round flea and tick protection

What do dog owners think?

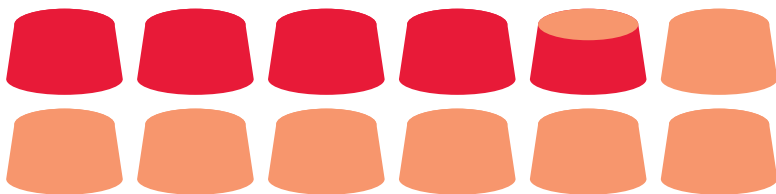
62%

of dog owners **remembered** their veterinarian's exact recommendation⁷

73%

of dog owners **agree** that their pets should have **12 months of flea and tick protection**⁷

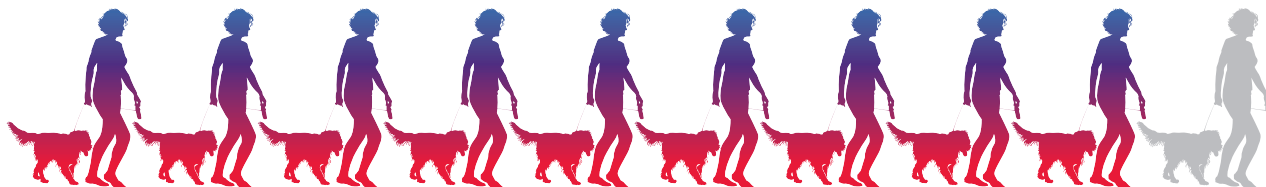
Is everyone following the 12-month recommendation? No.



The average dog owner applies approximately **4.6 monthly flea treatments in a year**.⁸

BRAVECTO® can help close the compliance gap

Pet owners **prefer BRAVECTO® 9 to 1** over monthly treatments⁹



Ask your Merck Animal Health Rep about
BRAVECTO® or visit **Bravectovets.com**

¹BRAVECTO® Chew for Dogs [prescribing information]. Madison, NJ: Merck Animal Health; 2014.

²BRAVECTO® Topical Solution for Dogs [prescribing information]. Madison, NJ: Merck Animal Health; 2016.

³BRAVECTO® Topical Solution for Cats [prescribing information]. Madison, NJ: Merck Animal Health; 2016.

⁴Rohdich N et al. *Parasites & Vectors*. 2014;7:83.

⁵Freedom of Information Summary, NADA 141-426. Approved May 15, 2014.

⁶Freedom of Information Summary, NADA 141-459. Approved 2016.

⁷Lavan et al. *P&V*. 2017; 10:284.

⁸Brakke Consulting US Flea Control & Heartworm Markets report; 2015.

⁹Lavan et al. *J Vet Sci Technol*. 2017; 8:439.

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*BRAVECTO® kills fleas and prevents flea infestations for 12 weeks. BRAVECTO® Chew and BRAVECTO® Topical Solution for Dogs kills ticks (black-legged tick, American dog tick, and brown dog tick) for 12 weeks and also kills lone star ticks for 8 weeks. BRAVECTO® Topical Solution for Cats kills ticks (black-legged tick) for 12 weeks and American dog ticks for 8 weeks.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION: BRAVECTO® has not been shown to be effective for 12-weeks' duration in puppies or kittens less than 6 months of age. BRAVECTO® Chew and BRAVECTO® Topical Solution for Dogs: The most common adverse reactions recorded in clinical trials were vomiting, decreased appetite, diarrhea, lethargy, polydipsia, and flatulence. BRAVECTO® is not effective against lone star ticks beyond 8 weeks of dosing. BRAVECTO® Topical Solution for Cats: The most common adverse reactions recorded in clinical trials were vomiting, itching, diarrhea, hair loss, decreased appetite, lethargy, and scabs/ulcerated lesions. BRAVECTO® is not effective against American dog ticks beyond 8 weeks of dosing. For topical use only. Avoid oral ingestion. The safety of BRAVECTO® has not been established in breeding, pregnant and lactating cats. Use with caution in cats with a history of neurologic abnormalities. Neurologic abnormalities have been reported in cats receiving BRAVECTO®, even in cats without a history of neurologic abnormalities.