



Too much kindness?

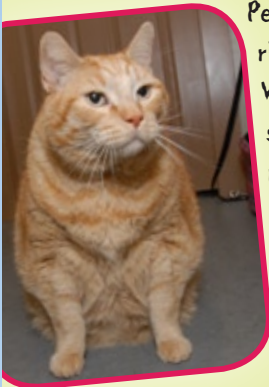
Imagine you're at the dinner table. Your dog is sitting, pressed up against your chair. He's looking up at you with adorable, pleading eyes begging for you to share your meal. "Oh, all right," you say, "I guess one piece won't hurt you." You slip him some food off your plate and he wolfs it down in one gulp.



Many people find it hard to resist feeding treats to their pets. But whether it's human food or snacks made for cats and dogs, it's possible to have too much of a good thing!



Pet obesity is on the rise in North America. Veterinarians are seeing a growing number of cats and dogs with weight-related health issues. Overweight pets are more likely to develop problems like diabetes,



heart disease, arthritis and certain skin conditions. Not to mention they may be uncomfortable, have difficulty moving and may not live as long.



LEIGH SCHINDLER/ISTOCK

Ways to keep your pet from packing on the extra pounds?

- **Limit how many treats you feed in a day.** Treats are added calories! When pets eat more calories than they burn exercising, they gain weight.
- **Avoid feeding human food.** Human food is often high in fat, sugar and salt – which can contribute to your pet's health problems.
- **Exercise!** Take your dog for daily walks. Encourage your cat to be more active during playtime using toys she has to chase around.
- **Visit your veterinarian for regular weigh-ins.** That way, you'll be able to catch any increases or decreases in your pet's weight.
- **Try using a feeding toy,** which dispenses food slowly and makes your pet "work" a little harder for her meal.



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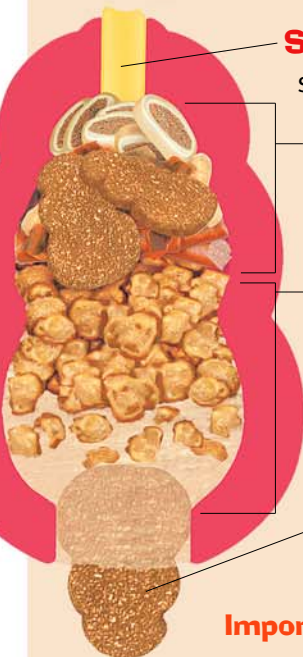


Crafty Corner



Does your **dog chew your shoes, socks or furniture? Maybe he's bored!** Try stuffing a **Kong** for him instead! It can be as simple as stuffing the Kong with a couple of cookies and peanut butter to creating a four-course meal! Check out this recipe or visit www.kongcompany.com for more irresistible ones!

get STUFFED!



Step One: TANTALIZER! Meat chunks, soft treat, peanut butter or cheese.

Step Two: DESSERT!

Fill 1/3 of the cavity with crunchy or soft dog treats.

Step Three: MAIN COURSE

Fill the last 2/3 with a mixture of canned and dry dog food OR **get creative** – try some mac and cheese or mashed bananas.

Step Four: The APPIE! Leave a super tasty tidbit sticking out of the opening. **YUM!!**

Important! Use Kongs safely! Your dog's safety is your responsibility. Always supervise your dog's use of Kongs to make sure he isn't tearing off pieces of rubber and eating them.

Hint: The original Kongs are made to last, imitations sometimes break apart more easily.

The BC SPCA encourages all pet guardians to improve the quality of life for animals beyond food, water and shelter, check out our website at www.sPCA.bc.ca/kids for more ideas on how to spice up your pet's life.

Kids Club members!

You: Send us your favourite original Kong recipe along with a photo of your pet enjoying her Kong. Deadline is January 31, 2005. A selection of recipes and photos will also be posted on our website at www.sPCA.bc.ca/kids.

We: Randomly pick three lucky submissions that will receive a COOL Kong gift package! Easy huh?

Send: BC SPCA Kids Club
1245 East 7th Avenue
Vancouver, B.C. V5T 1R1

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Welcome to the first issue of Bark!

- the BC SPCA's magazine for kids.

Bark! is packed with animal facts, information and ways you can help animals.

While **Bark!** is a great magazine on its own, **BC SPCA Kids Club members** receive much more.

To become a member check out the back page and join the hundreds of kids throughout B.C. making a difference for animals.

We hope you enjoy **Bark!** and would love your feedback!

Yours truly,



Jeter Daniell
(Husky/ Malamute Cross)

Craig Daniell

Craig Daniell
(CEO of the BC SPCA)



Window blinds

It's no secret that cats – especially kittens – love to climb! Window blinds can be especially tempting, but this isn't without risks. Becoming tangled in the cord used to raise and lower the blinds can lead to serious injuries.

Avoid a CATastrophe!

Keep your fluffy family members safe! Watch out for these common household dangers for cats.



People food

Certain foods that we keep in our kitchens are unhealthy or even toxic for cats. Ones to avoid include onions and garlic, chocolate and caffeine, grapes and raisins, raw eggs and meat and – this one may surprise you – milk.

String, yarn and hair elastics

We've all seen adorable pictures of kittens playing with balls of yarn... but that doesn't mean it's safe for the kitten! While many cats love to bat at just about anything, these seemingly harmless "toys" can lead to choking or an internal blockage. Yikes!



Poison plants

Lots of homes and gardens are brightened by beautiful plants and flowers. In some cases, though, those pretty petals are poisonous for cats. Lilies, azaleas and tulips are among those listed as especially toxic.

Plastic bags

Here's another reason to choose paper over plastic! A cat with his head caught in the handle of a bag is no laughing matter. Any plastic bags in the house should be stored safely away from pets.



Balconies

Cats like to leap. But they don't always realize how high up they are, or land on their feet. If your home has a balcony, be mindful of letting your kitty play out there. Many families choose to enclose their patios so their feline friends can enjoy the fresh air without the danger.

? Want to learn more about the different plants, foods and household products that are dangerous for pets – and why? Visit aspca.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control.