

## Playing with your cat for weight loss

When you combine exercise with proper diet and lifestyle, you extend the years you'll have to hug and love and nap with your furry feline friend. Playing with your cat daily will enhance the bond you share, and you will know your doing both yourself and your cat a world of good.



### Get the right equipment – toys, toys, toys!

-commercial cat toys are a great option, and many cats enjoy carrying around a catnip-stuffed mouse or chasing a feather wand. But don't forget the many household items that cast love:

- Plastic bottle caps and lids
- Empty, clean soda bottles with a few dry beans inside
- Empty paper grocery bags or cardboard boxes
- Laser pointers or small flashlights

### Ideas for play

-Kittens will play with anything, anytime, but adults cats often slow down considerably and need our initiation to play and exercise. Choose a time each day that you can dedicate to playtime.

- Your cat may not seem interested at first. Be patient. Try drawing a feather wand slowly across his front paws, or in short, jerky motions. Eventually your kitty will become intrigued.

- Cats are natural hunters. There are several toys and puzzles on the market that are designed for you to put food or treats in, and kitty has to find a way to get it out. You can also make an inexpensive version by cutting a few nickel-sized holes in the side of a 20oz soda bottle. Put a few of kitty's kibble in here, and leave it in the floor. Kitty will roll the bottle around the house to find a way to get at the goodies inside.

-Another way to encourage the 'hunter' activity are to portion out your cat's daily ration and put it in different locations...behind the couch, on top of the refrigerator, under the bed, etc.

- Let kitty help you make the bed. When you are putting on new sheets, put her in the middle of the bed and cover her with the sheet. Some cats love to pounce the shadow of your hand outside the sheet!

### Check weight monthly

-Have your cat weighed by your veterinarian monthly until he or she reaches the right weight. Also, have the clinic staff keep kitty's nails trimmed so that playtimes don't become prickly affairs. After kitty reaches the desired weight, reweigh every three months.