

## When is a Cat Too Skinny?

**Most cats weigh 7 to 10 pounds, but some breeds may be healthy at higher or lower weights.**

*J. Veronika Kiklevich, DVM*

Q. I am concerned about my 3-year-old, spayed, purebred Persian. I recently took her to the vet for an annual checkup and vaccinations. She weighed 7.5 pounds and checked out healthy stool sample and all.

My concern is that she is underweight, but our vet says everything is OK. She eats little bits of food throughout the day and night. She is the only cat in my apartment, and she runs around a lot in the evening and sleeps all day. Do you think she is naturally thin? She is not a large-boned cat, yet she feels tiny and thin.

A. Classically, veterinarians are taught that the average cat weighs 7 to 10 pounds. That does not take into account the wide variations in breed types. A small Siamese may weigh only 6 pounds, yet a large Maine Coon typically weighs more than 15 pounds. Still, it sounds as though (in terms of pounds) your kitty is well within the normal range. What concerns me is the fact that she feels thin to you. This just may be her normal weight. Most cats I see are overweight, and many cats that I think are at an ideal weight seem skinny to their owners. Still, for your peace of mind, consider asking your vet to perform routine blood work, specifically a chemistry panel, feline virus screen and urinalysis to see if there are any changes that might be indicative of early disease. If her blood work is normal, do not worry about her current weight but keep a close eye on her for any changes.