

How can I keep my overweight cat from eating the others cats' food?

CatChannel expert Jeanne Adlon, professional cat sitter, explains how to keep an overweight cat on a diet in a multicat household.

By Jeanne Adlon

Q: I have an overweight cat in a multi-cat household. How can I prevent him from eating my other cats' food?

A: Cats come in all shapes and sizes but it is best to keep them to a reasonable weight. Sometimes that involves a wake-up call from our kitties. I remember when cat sitting Simon, a large orange tabby in a multi-cat household, I would find the hood of his litterbox off the litter pan, usually in another area of the home. I could not figure out why until I discovered that he was becoming so fat that he could not get out of the hood opening without getting stuck, so he dragged it around with him till it dislodged itself! Needless to say, Simon was put on a diet and received his own litter pan, sans hood.

It is difficult to have one kitty stick to a diet when you have a multi-cat household. I always suggest feeding the cats separately and putting your slim cat's food in a place your corpulent cat can't squeeze into. You also can try putting the food you do not want him to reach up on a counter. Overweight cats have trouble jumping. That said, visit your veterinarian to make sure his problem is not rooted elsewhere. If he is healthy and it is just his healthy appetite getting the better of him, there are diet foods available through your veterinarian or at the pet store.

I also suggest trying to incorporate some exercise into your cat's routine, no matter what his weight. This is particularly true of indoor cats. I find the simplest toys work the best, such as a crumpled piece of paper or a string toy, preferably with a bell. It has been my experience that weight loss in cats is very gradual, so be patient. Your kitty will thank you — especially when he can do things such as squeezing in and out of his hooded litterbox without getting stuck!**Jeanne's Tip of the Week:** Be sure to seal dry food bags tightly. If possible, keep them in a covered container or even in the refrigerator. Open bags attract bugs and can spoil. [More Tips](#)
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