

## VPI Reimburses \$14 Million for Obesity-Related Conditions in Pets

**Veterinary Pet Insurance, of Brea, Calif., reimbursed policyholders more than \$14 million last year for conditions associated with obesity. This represents 7 percent of all medical claims submitted to VPI in 2006.**

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The average claimed cost of treatment for obesity-related conditions, such as arthritis, diabetes, hypertension, asthma, hepatitis and lipomas, in 2006 was \$832, up from \$713 in 2005 and \$702 in 2004.

“Most pet owners think of pet insurance in the context of routine care and the unexpected; they fail to think of how it protects against illnesses like those associated with obesity,” said Carol McConnell, DVM, vice president and chief veterinary officer for VPI. “VPI Pet Insurance reimburses for conditions potentially related to and exacerbated by obesity and offers options for routine care coverage to encourage pet owners to bring their pet to the veterinarians for regular physical exams and preventive health care.”

Studies reveal that 25 to 40 percent of American pets are overweight, VPI reports. Pet owners should consult their veterinarians to determine an ideal weight for their pet and for effective weight loss measures.

“Pet obesity begins with excessive kindness,” McConnell added. “Food is the primary way some pet owners demonstrate love to their pet.”