

# Now pets have an obesity epidemic! Charity launches campaign to stop owners killing their animals with fatty foods

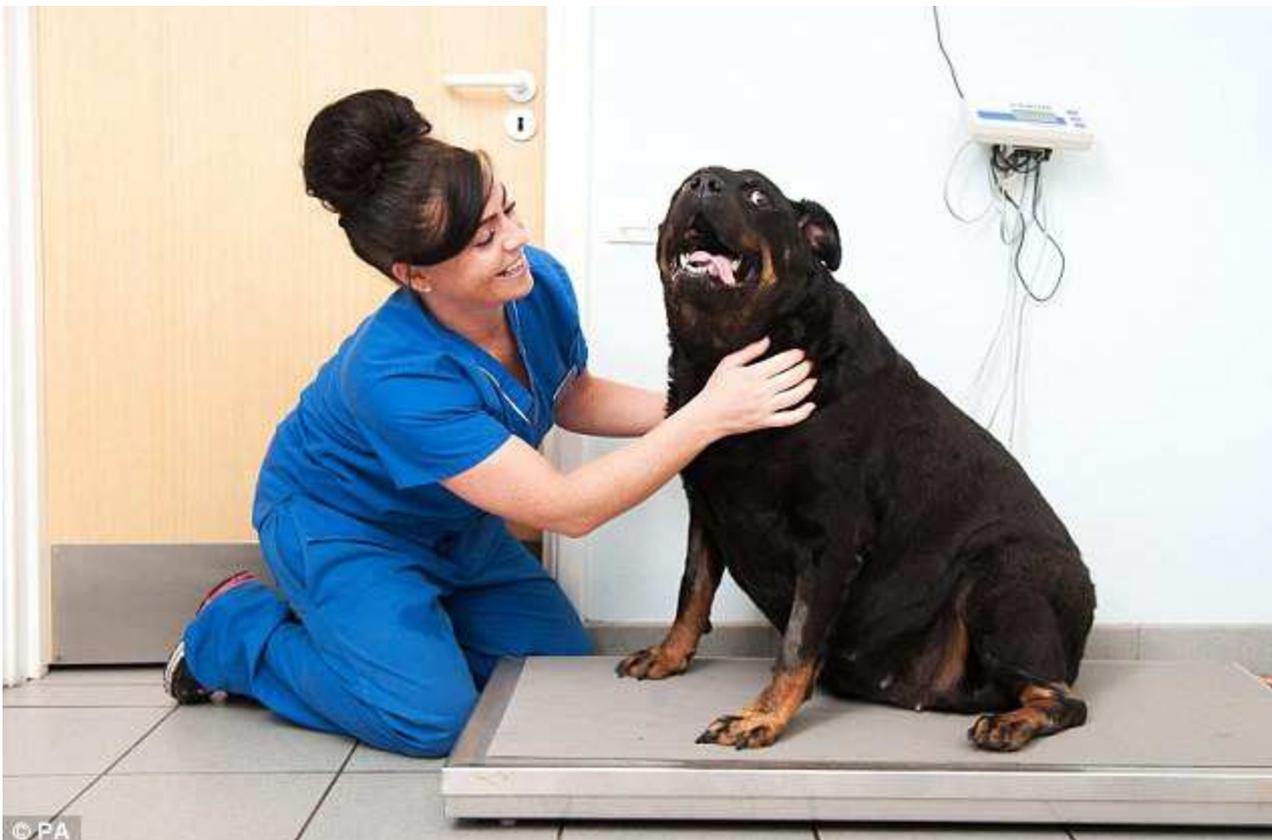
- 18.5m pets are fed inappropriate diets while 13.5m are 'treated' to junk food
  - Nearly 50% of owners 'treat' their pets because 'it makes the animal happy'
- By [Suzannah Hills](#)

**PUBLISHED:**04:39 GMT, 14 March 2013 | **UPDATED:**12:01 GMT, 14 March 2013

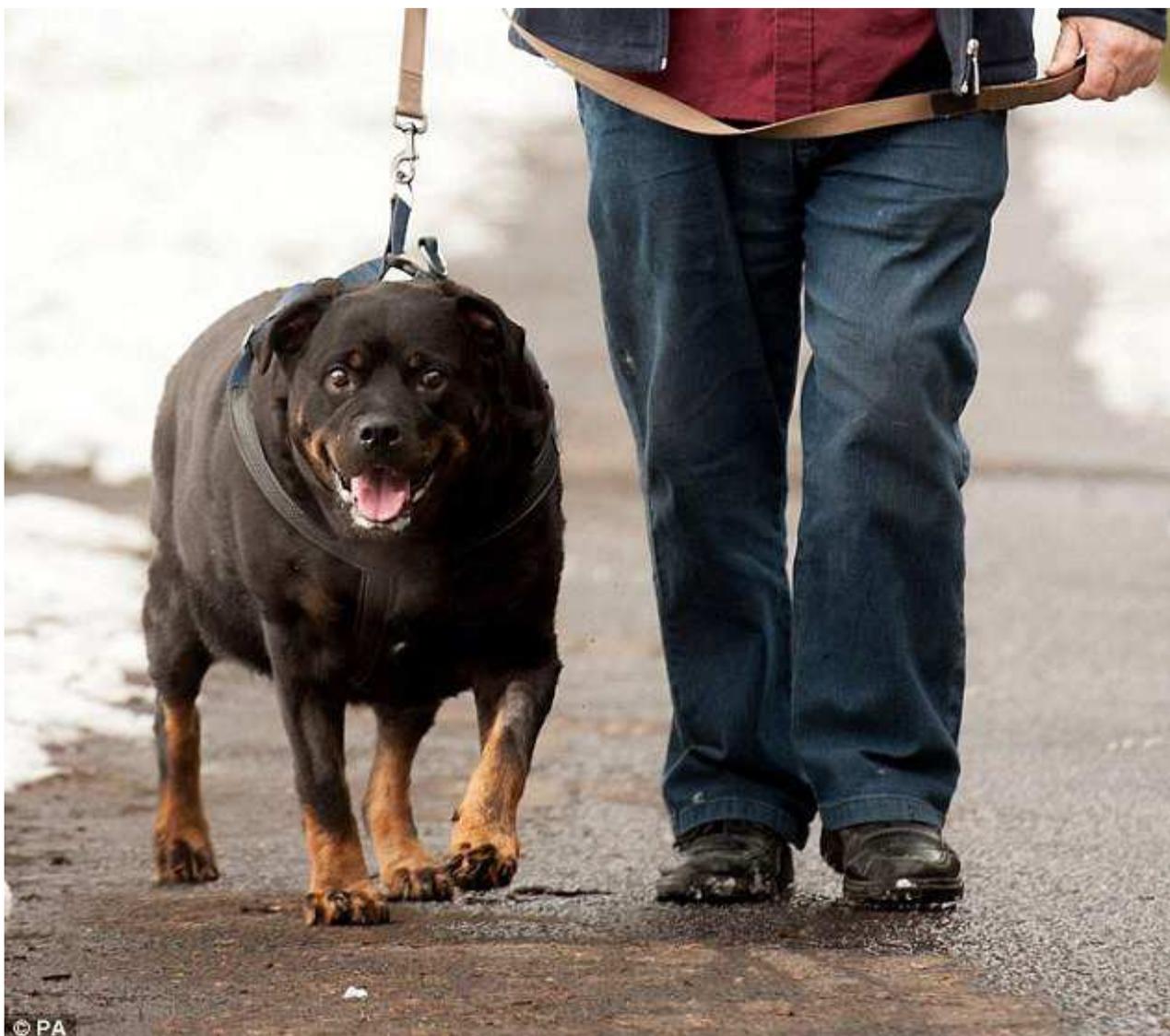
More than 18 million pets are at risk of early death because of poor diets consisting of takeaways, crisps and cakes, a report claims.

Unprecedented numbers of dogs, cats and rabbits are being fed 'potentially life-threatening' fatty foods which can lead to arthritis, diabetes and heart disease, veterinary charity PDSA has found.

The 'deadly diets' have left animals unable to walk, play or even clean themselves, it said.



Obesity epidemic: PDSA nurse Danielle Toorish with Rico Livingstone, a six-year-old Rottweiler who weighs 58.5kg, at the PDSA Clinic in Edinburgh



Getting back into shape: Vets say animal obesity is entirely avoidable and are urging pet owners to feed their animals appropriate diets

While an estimated 18.5 million pets are fed inappropriate diets, some 13.5 million animals are 'treated' to fatty or sugary treats and junk food, the PDSA Animal Wellbeing (PAW) Report revealed.

Elaine Pendlebury, PDSA senior veterinary surgeon, said: 'Pet obesity poses not only major health risks such as diabetes, arthritis and heart disease, but sadly also means daily misery for millions of pets who are feeling the strain from carrying too much weight.'

Vet practices across the UK see the consequences of pet obesity every single day such as obese dogs unable to enjoy regular walks due to exhaustion, fat cats that can't jump or play, and rabbits so hopelessly overweight they can't clean themselves properly.

'And then there are other obesity-related health conditions which can mean pets don't lead the long and happy lives they should.'

Dr Alex German, an animal obesity specialist at the University of Liverpool's veterinary school, said pet obesity was 'entirely preventable'.



Both cats Cookie (left) and Noo Noo Bush (right) weigh more than 90 per cent over their ideal bodyweights



No more cookies and cream: Cookie the cat weighs 90 per cent more than her recommended healthy weight and has been put on a strict diet



Labrador Duke (left) weighs eight stone and vet nurse Samantha Flavell holds Roxy (right) also overweight

He said obesity can be reversed with 'veterinary supervision and owner dedication'.

Other findings from the PAW report showed that nearly half of owners 'treat' their pets because they believe it makes the animal feel happy.

While a further 29 per cent of owners do so because it makes them happy.

Some 61 per cent of owners think severely overweight pets should be removed from someone who persistently ignores veterinary advice while 51 per cent of owners believe overweight people are more likely to have fat pets.

YouGov surveyed nearly 4,000 dog, cat and rabbit owners; 466 vets and vet nurses; and 553 children for the report this month.



Twelve-year-old Yorkshire Terrier 'Max' is overweight and has been put on a six-month diet exercise programme



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Xena the Staffordshire Bull terrier who weighs nearly four stone and is one of the 8.5 million UK pets being overfed



Feeling woof: Dog Bobby weighs 65 per cent more than the recommended healthy weight for his breed

Fonte: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2293076/Millions-pets-face-early-death-diets-fatty-foods-takeaways-growing-animal-obesity-epidemic.html>