How do you incorporate the nutritional assessment within the physical exam?

**Screening Evaluation:**
- Nutritional history/activity level
- Body weight
- Body/muscle condition score

**Normal Physical Exam**
No nutritional risk factors identified

**Abnormal Physical Exam Findings**
or nutritional risk factors identified

**Extended Evaluation**
Make a specific dietary recommendation

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What do the WSAVA Guidelines say?

Incorporate a nutritional assessment and specific dietary recommendation in the physical exam for every pet, every time they visit.

It's as simple as that.

What is included in the nutritional assessment?

**A. For every patient:** do a screening evaluation (nutritional history/activity level, body weight & body/muscle condition score)

**B. For a patient with abnormal physical exam findings or nutritional risk factors:** do an extended evaluation.

*Nutritional risk factors listed on back*
How to develop and customize a written protocol that works for your practice

Make a **team commitment** to acknowledge nutrition as a vital assessment and follow the AAHA Nutritional Assessment Guidelines for Dogs and Cats because your patients deserve it.

Together, develop a customized **written protocol** to ensure every patient receives a nutritional assessment and specific dietary recommendation at every visit. (See example on right)

Visit WSAVA.org to see the full WSAVA Guidelines and tips for bringing them to life in your practice.

**Nutritional risk factors:**
- Lifestage considerations
- Abnormal BCS or MCS
- Poor skin or hair coat
- Systemic or dental disease
- Snacks, table food > 10% of total calories
- Unconventional diet
- Gastrointestinal upset
- Inadequate or inappropriate housing

**CHECK IN**
- Client fills out nutrition history/update form
- Weigh in
- **Front desk staff** places nutrition history/update form in patient’s records

**EXAM ROOM**
- **Veterinary technician** records history using nutrition history form to help ask questions and initiate discussion
- **Veterinarian** performs a physical exam and nutritional assessment
- **Veterinarian** makes a specific nutrition recommendation and documents the recommendation in patient’s records
- **Veterinary technician** fills out travel log, including nutrition recommendation
- **Veterinary technician** asks client if there are any questions and reinforces the recommendation
- **Veterinary technician** dispenses tools (measuring cups, literature about nutrition, information packet)
- **Veterinary technician** sends patient home with an information packet even if they don’t purchase recommended food

**CHECK OUT**
- **Front desk staff** asks client again if there are any questions
- **Front desk staff** dispenses food and reinforces recommendation
- **Front desk staff** schedules a callback in 2-7 days if recommendation is for a new food
- **Front desk staff** enters reminder code for re-purchase of food two weeks before food will run out

*Including nutrition in the screening portion of an evaluation is paramount to providing the best care to pets. The WSAVA guidelines will take this message to a global level and help develop a partnership between pet owner and their veterinary hospital.*

Jolle Kirpensteijn, DVM, PhD, DACVS, DECVS
WSAVA President