

# PETS & PEOPLE

## Lose The “Pooch” With Your Pup

(NAPSA)—According to a recent Association for Pet Obesity Prevention (APOP) study, almost half of the dogs in the United States are overweight or obese. With so much attention being paid to human obesity statistics, it's interesting that our bad health habits are trickling down to our pets, putting pooches at risk for diabetes, arthritis and respiratory hardships. Because an extra few pounds on a dog can equal 30 to 50 additional pounds on a human, start making healthier lifestyle choices now that will impact both of you.

### Eat Right, Snack Smart

Lean protein and vegetables are key to both healthy human and dog diets. Dr. Ernie Ward, president of APOP and a practicing veterinarian, recommends dog food including real meat and vegetables to provide essential nutrients that dogs need to stay strong and healthy.

Rachael Ray Nutrish dog food, available in Chicken & Veggies and Beef & Brown Rice varieties, features high-quality meat as the first ingredient and excludes fillers such as by-products, artificial flavors and preservatives, ensuring dogs get balanced meals. How often you feed your pet is important, too. Dr. Ward suggests serving two to three smaller meals as opposed to one feeding to keep your pet's metabolism up to speed.

### Paws To Pavement

A dietary revamp is just the first step in slimming down with your hound—regular physical activity is vital, too. As the weather warms up, Dr. Ward recommends striving for 30 minutes of outdoor exercise with your pup each day. Walking at a brisk pace for 20 to 30 minutes daily is a healthy ritual that will pay off for



**Nutritious food, regular exercise and plenty of water are terrific ways for you and your pooch to slim down.**

you and your canine companion physically and emotionally. Running on the beach, tossing a Frisbee in the park and even “doggy paddling” in the nearest lake or ocean are some other summer activities that help shed pounds while bonding with your dog.

### Wags For Water

After vigorous physical activity, make sure to provide plenty of cool, clean water to quench your pet's thirst. Water also helps eliminate toxins in the bloodstream, keeps organs functioning properly and boosts overall health. Drinking about six to eight glasses of water per day helps burn fat and flush toxins from the human body, too.

Before em“bark”ing on a new routine, be sure to see both your doctor and your dog's veterinarian for an annual checkup and additional healthy lifestyle advice. For more information, visit [www.NutrishForPets.com](http://www.NutrishForPets.com).