

FIT OR FAT?

THE RHODESIAN RIDGBACK

**AN OWNER'S, BREEDER'S AND VETERINARIAN'S GUIDE TO HEALTHY
WEIGHT MANAGEMENT**

**By: Erin Coogan
Aegis Rhodesian Ridgebacks**



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Introduction

First, a bit of History. Rhodesian Ridgebacks are a Hound, bred to hunt and track large game, especially lions, in South Africa. They were never used to Kill or Take Down lions (no canine could take on a 400 pound cat). Instead, they were used in small packs of 3 to 5 dogs/bitches to track down, then circle and agitate the animal, keeping clear of the claws, until the hunters caught up with the GUN! This required great speed, agility and endurance. Slow and Fat meant.....DEAD!

The African Ridgedogs were never used as a water retriever, crocodiles made this impossible. This being said, Rhodesian Ridgebacks are NOT supposed to have a layer of fat or padding over their ribs, shoulders or loin. Most water retrieving dogs DO genetically carry this layer to keep them warm in the water all day, Rhodesian Ridgebacks DO NOT. Look at a Ridgeback physique like you would a Gun Dog, i.e. Vizsla, Pointer, and Weimeraner

Rhodesian Ridgebacks DO have a genetically SLOW METABOLISM, making following of the “suggested feeding” instructions on dog food labels nearly impossible. Every Rhodesian Ridgeback owner must learn how to monitor and adjust, as necessary, the intake of food and the amount of exercise needed to keep their pet at a healthy weight for his/her size and structure.

COMMON MISTAKES:

“I only feed my dog 2 cups of food each day”Your dog may only need 1 cup!
“But Fido is acting so hungry all of the time”Most RR’s will eat with reckless abandon, they simply “think” they are hungry all day long. Cut the food amount down and fill-in with Canned Green Beans, Plain Popped Corn, or Shredded Wheat.
“I only give Fido 2 doggie biscuits a day”Each large dog biscuit can be as much as ½ a cup of food! Eeeek! No Biscuits For Fat Fido!
“Fido steals food all of the time”Put the food AWAY!
“My Veterinarian says Fido looks Perfect”Really? Give them this Guide.

EASY FIXES:

#1 Less Food, More Exercise
#2 Less Food, More Exercise
#3 Less Food, More Exercise

Got It?

The attached pages contain many pictures of Rhodesian Ridgebacks. Where available, the size, weight and food intake are noted. Thanks Jeanne Armstrong and Jim Harrison for help with picture samples used

PLEASE show this to anyone that will look

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FIT OR FAT? A PICTURE STUDY OF THE RHODESIAN RIDGEBACK



“PICTURE OF PERFECTION”

ASFA Field Champion, AKC Field Champion, AKC Conformation Champion
Ridgeview’s Cirque Of The Towers,
SC, CGC, RN, NA, NAJ, ET (Endurance Trial)
“Cirque”

26 3/4” Tall 90 Pounds

Owned by Jim Harrison and Sally Swenson
Salt Lake City, Utah

So, why is Cirque “Perfect”?

He does **NOT** have a layer or padding anywhere on his body.

You can **Easily** see his ribs without appearing skinny.

You can **Easily** see his waist from the side, not only from above.

He has an **Apparent** “Tuck Up” underneath. Females’ should be more pronounced.

He has **Easily** visible muscles, even when standing still.

Female 26 ½" Tall 83 Pounds



Same Female plus 20 extra pounds!

Female 26" 84 Pounds



note: She could stand to lose 3-5 pounds to clean up the extra weight around her neck and to define her waistline.

She looks fine from the side, but look at her from behind. Optimal weight 78 lbs.



Male 25" 70 Pounds 5 months old



his size

note: No puppy fat here! Perfect for

Same Male 28" 100 + Pounds 10 months old



pounds overweight for his size.

note: Loss of body definition, now 5-7

Female 26" 90 Pounds



note: No apparent tuck up and no ribs to be seen. Fat chest sticking out the front.

Same Female 26" 80 Pounds



note: She has a Neck! And a Tuck up!

Just plain “Correctly Weighted” Ridgebacks

Male 27 ¾” 93 Pounds



Male 30” 105 Pounds



Male 26” 75 Pounds 9 months old



Male 27” 89 Pounds 2 years old



Female 24” 52 Pounds 5 months old



Female 25 ½” 65 Pounds 10 months old



Now from Behind



Male 24 ½” 60 Pounds



Female 27” 89 Pounds



Male 28” 98 Pounds LEAN



How do Ridgebacks get FAT?

And From Above



Male 23" 50 Pounds 5 months old



Male 28 1/2" 98 Pounds



Female 24" 50 Pounds 5 months old

Finally, the Front



Big Heads, OK! Big, Fat, Flabby Chests? No Way!



**Male 24 1/2" 50 Pounds
5 months old**



Female 24 1/2" 73 Pounds

Size Comparisons

Male 31" 105 Pounds



Male 30" 135 Pounds



Male 28" 100 Pounds



Male 28" 93 Pounds



These are perfect examples of why Size and Structure (bone) dictate correct weight. Don't Blame Fat on Big Boned.....that's what parent's say to make you feel better about yourself.....dog's only hear "Bla, Bla, Bla, DINNER, Bla, Bla, Bla"

Overweight



Bullmastiff, not Ridgeback!