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**The Veterinarian's Role in Handling Animal Abuse Cases : Weight Gain in Growing Medium-Sized Dogs**

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Weights of starved animals going through compensatory growth spurts can be compared to these expected growth increases in normal growing dogs. The growth of a medium-sized breed of dog can be compared to the growth rate for 5 medium-sized dogs breeds shown in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Using table 1 it can be seen that for a Bull dog who weighs 13 lb. at 3 months and 19 lb at 4 months, there is a 46% increase in weight between 3 and 4 months of age. Furthermore, the weight gain for the all 5 breeds month to month is as follows;

3 - 4 mo:30 - 46%, 4 - 5 mo: 19 - 27%, and 5 - 6 mo: 13 - 6 mo.

So, if you have a 5 month-old medium-sized breed of dog whose weight increases 50 % from 5 - 6 months, this is far in excess of a 15 % weight gain (the approximate weight gain for a 5 to 6 month-old medium-sized breed of dog). This is proof of previous malnutrition and/or underfeeding (i.e. starvation).

Additionally, if the weight of a puppy's parents is known, the puppy's "genetic weight" is known and if the puppy's adult size is significantly less than this "genetic weight" it can be said that the dog's growth has been stunted.

	<u>2mo</u>	<u>3mo</u>	<u>4 mo (% incr)</u>	<u>5mo (% incr)</u>	<u>6 mo (% incr)</u>
<b>Bulldog</b>	7	13 (88)	19 (46)	24 (26)	24 (16)
<b>Chow Chow</b>	9	15 (66)	22 (46)	28 (27)	28 (14)
<b>Poodle</b>	10	18 (80)	26 (44)	31 (19)	31 (13)
<b>Collie</b>	11	20 (81)	29 (45)	35 (21)	35 (14)
<b>Setter</b>	12	24 (100)	32 (33)	39 (22)	39 (13)

**Table 1** Average monthly weights for 5 medium-sized dog breeds. The per cent weight increase relative to the previous month is in italics. The monthly weights are taken from the chart in Fig.1

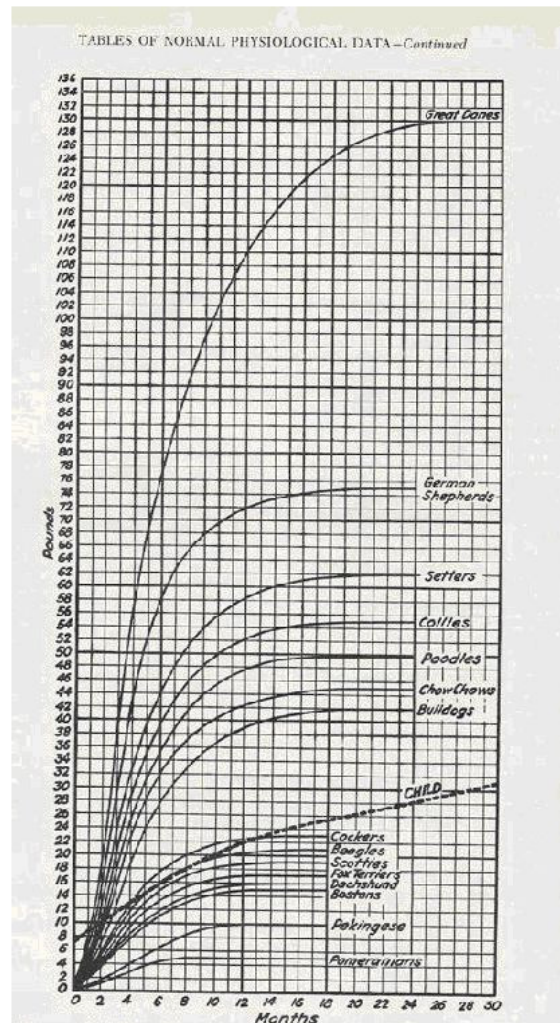


Fig. 1 Growth chart for small, medium and large breed dogs, CVT VI,  
p.1366 1977.

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