Tuft’s Animal Care and Condition Scale for Dogs

Tufts Animal Care and Condition* (TACC) scales for assessing body condition, weather and environmental safety, and physical care in dogs

*A tool developed for veterinarians, animal control officers, police, and cruelty investigators by Tufts Center for Animals and Public Policy. Published in: Patronek, GJ. Recognizing and reporting animal abuse ~ a veterinarian’s guide. Denver, CO: American Humane Association, 1997.

I. Body condition scale (Palpation essential for long-haired dogs; each dog’s condition should be interpreted in light of the typical appearance of the breed)

- 5 Emaciated
  - All bony prominences evident from a distance
  - No discernible body fat
  - Obvious loss of muscle mass
  - Severe abdominal tuck and extreme hourglass shape

- 4 Very underweight
  - Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, and pelvic bones easily visible
  - No palpable body fat
  - Some loss of muscle mass
  - Prominent abdominal tuck and hourglass shape to torso

- 3 Thin
  - Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible, pelvic bones becoming prominent.
  - Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat
  - Obvious waist and abdominal tuck
  - Minimal loss of muscle mass

- 2 Underweight/lean
  - Ribs easily palpable with minimal SQ fat
  - Abdominal tuck evident
  - Waist clearly visible from above
  - No muscle loss
  - May be normal for lean breeds such as sighthounds

- 1 Ideal
  - Ribs palpable without excess SQ fat
  - Abdomen tucked slightly when viewed from the side
  - Waist visible from above, just behind ribs