

## KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- Avoid the noise where possible or block it out with music, shut the blinds and turn the lights on.
- Provide a safe spot for your dog to hide when they are fearful.
- Teach them calming and coping mechanisms.
- Comfort your dog– this will not reward fear but rather alleviate it.
- Provide treats or toys to change your dog's emotional state.
- Contact a veterinarian for treatment advice and medication may be prescribed.
- PLAN AHEAD. Be prepared for storm season, NYE fireworks etc.
- Crate Training/Create a safe place.



### TREATMENT:

There is no "quick fix" for noise sensitivity! Help your pet through these fear-related issues; patience will be an important factor in the success of treating this condition.

#### Learning to stay in a safe zone:

- Teach your dog to relax on a mat or in a crate using positive reinforcement techniques such as luring with treats.
- Reward your dog with praise and treats when he lies on the mat or in the crate and gradually relaxes.
- Massaging: gentle ear slides, slow calm strokes all the way down the body and gently kneading their loose skin can help to relax them.
- Feed treats, bones and other rewards in that safe zone so they begin to associate this area as positive one. NEVER FORCE them to go in there though...Allow them to have a choice!
- Have ADAPTIL spray on hand to spray their mat before event.
- When the storm is imminent, the dog should be given medication (if prescribed) direct them to their safe zone and reward them with long-lasting food puzzles or chews.



## NOISE SENSITIVITY– 'STORM PHOBIA'



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## What is noise sensitivity?

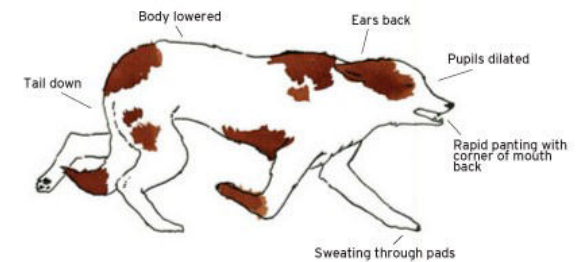
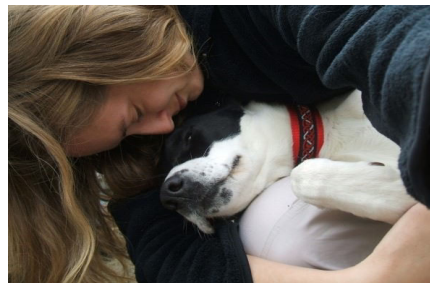


Noise sensitivity is a fear response that occurs in dog's when they are exposed to certain noises like thunder storms, fireworks, alarms and vacuum cleaner. Some common fearful behaviours your pet may experience include:

- Hiding under furniture or similar
- Shaking
- Avoidance behaviour (escaping)
- Defensive aggression (growling, barking, lunging)
- Fearful body posture (ears flattened, hunched over, head & body low etc.)
- Destructive behaviour
- Vocalisation
- Uncontrolled urination & defecation
- Drooling & panting
- Pacing, unable to settle .
- Increased heart rate, sweaty paws, tense muscles, dilated pupils.

Do you have a dog displaying these behaviours at any time? Storm Phobia and other behaviour problems often worsen over time because they become sensitised from repeated negative exposures and can often develop over time to other behavioural problems such as separation anxiety and obsessive compulsive disorder.

- **DO-**
- Provide a safe place for your pet such as spare room, crate (if they like it) or a comfortable refuge somewhere of their preference.
- Consult one of our veterinarians to make sure the behaviour problem your pet is experiencing is not related to a medical condition. Resolving phobic fear issues often require assistance of a behaviourist along side a veterinarian.
- Exercise can help to reduce stress and help create a tired and relaxed atmosphere. Find an activity your pet enjoys and take time to play a fun game and/or one-on-one time with him/her. This depends on the severity of the noise sensitivity.
- Use oral herbal calming remedies or DAP (dog appeasement pheromone) to help take the edge off in mild cases.
- Distract with food & favourite toys during the actual event & comfort him/her as much as possible.
- PLAN AHEAD... If medication is required; make sure you have them readily available and medicate as early AS possible before the noise begins and before stress levels are elevated.



- **DON'T-**
- Don't force your pet to interact with something he is afraid of. 'Flooding' your pet to show them there is 'nothing to be afraid of' while under extreme stress can make their fear worse and escalate their condition.
- Don't allow any new stimulus if your pet is already fearful and keep his routine as normal as possible during this time. E.g. bringing a friends dog over during a storm.
- Don't be afraid to comfort and soothe your dog with soft words and patting.
- Don't punish your dog...**FEAR IS AN EMOTION NOT A BEHAVIOUR!** It is an involuntary response. Imagine yourself sitting in the window seat of a plane and sparks are flashing past the window while someone is trying to teach you another language? Would you be in the state of mind to learn or be taking any of the information in? This is the state of mind your dog is in when they are suffering from a noise sensitivity or phobia.