



Remember Remember the 5th of November!



Many dogs are terrified of the sound of fireworks causing them great distress and it's also very upsetting for the owners to see their beloved Fido turned into a quivering, panting, drooling nervous wreck.

Here are a few tips to try and help your dog through the next few months.

- **DO** Keep your dog (and cats) indoors once it becomes dark. Make sure they have had plenty of exercise before dark so they are more likely to settle.
- **DON'T** make a fuss of your dog once he starts to show signs of anxiety on hearing fireworks. This confirms to the dog that there is something to worry about as you are rewarding the anxious behaviour, telling him it's good to behave like that. At the same time don't chastise him; this will also make him worse. The best course of action is to completely ignore him, no eye contact, no words, nothing at all. This is very difficult, as we all just want to make him feel better, but it is the best way to tackle it. Yawn, stretch, whistle, sing, act like there isn't a worry in the world. This helps the dog to feel that if you're not worried, then maybe there isn't anything to worry about.
- **DO** keep windows, doors and curtains shut. Try to do this before the fireworks start as doing it after may alert your dog to there being something wrong. Put the TV on quite loud and as many radios as you have in rooms around the house to drown out the sound.
- **DO** give him something to keep him occupied, again, do this before the fireworks start as giving him something after he has become anxious rewards the anxious behaviour! You could try stuffing a Kong with something really tasty and freezing it so it last longer. Try hiding treats around the house and sending him off to find them, or what about a cardboard box stuffed with newspaper and treats-something he's allowed to rip up for a change!
- **DON'T** let a firework phobic dog off lead if you do have to walk close to dark. Many dogs will just bolt if they hear a firework and the results of this could be disastrous. Also, if they need to relieve their selves after dark, perhaps put them on lead to take them into the garden, again, frightened dogs are capable of anything when their 'fight or flight' mechanism kicks in. The most laid back dogs have been known to jump 6 ft fences to escape once frightened by a firework.
- **DO** allow your dog to hide if he wants to. If he has a crate, cover it with a blanket and make it a safe little den for him. If he doesn't have a crate, cover a table with a blanket, a place where he can feel safe is what you are trying to achieve.

There are products designed to help dogs and cats with stress and anxiety during this time, both natural and medicinal. In some cases we can prescribe sedative type medication, but this will only be after a thorough examination by a Veterinary Surgeon during a consultation and will depend on certain factors such as the dog's age and general health.

Other products available are Adaptil for Dogs (formerly known as DAP) and Feliway for cats, made by Ceva Animal Health Ltd. Adaptil is a synthetic copy of the natural appeasing pheromone the mother dog produces to comfort and reassure her puppies. Feliway is a synthetic copy of the pheromone cats release when rubbing their heads on objects, it helps to make them feel safe in their own territory. Both these products are available in the form of plug in diffusers and sprays and Adaptil is also available in the form of a collar. For more information, visit secrettohappy pets.com.

If you would like to discuss any of the items mentioned in this article or to make an appointment please telephone the surgery on 01384 372849.

Training Tip

Staff News

We have 2 new members of staff that have joined our team. The first is **Kim Heath**. Kim is working towards becoming a Qualified Veterinary Nurse and starts her training course next year.

The 2nd is **Diane Mills**. Diane is our new evening receptionist; she also has a small dog grooming business.

We would also like to welcome **Louise Hales**, one of our Vets, back after her maternity leave. Louise had a little girl in October last year and has come back to work with us part time.

Opening Hours

8.30am – 7.00pm weekdays
10.00am – 12.00pm Saturdays

Consulting Hours

9.00am – 10.30am,
2.30pm – 4.30pm &
5.00pm – 7.00pm weekdays
10.00am – 12.00pm Saturdays

Consultations are by appointment only,
please call the surgery to book.

Adaptil & Feliway Offer

Buy any 2 products and receive
a £4 voucher (while stocks last).

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Dogs thrive on mental stimulation. A good game to teach them is 'Find it'. This can be done with toys or treats. Start by hiding treats around the house with your dog out of view and then sending him off to 'Find it'.

Join in with him and make it really exciting for him. Next move on to the garden and do the same. You can even do it when out on a walk, it works exceptionally well in long grass!! This helps your dog to use his brain and one of his best senses, his smell!

It can also help as a distraction when out on a walk, if you have a slightly nervous or excitable dog who may react to cyclists, joggers or other dogs, you can throw the treats to the side of you and hopefully he'll be too busy to notice them as they walk on by!

If you have a dog that 'inhales' their meals at feeding time, you could use 'find It' to slow them down by scattering it on the patio or in the garden. Remember though to adjust the amount you feed him to make allowances for the treats as you don't want to make your dog fat!



Nursing Clinics

We now offer Nursing Clinics every weekday between
11.30 and 12.15

We offer the following services during nursing clinic times:

- Nail clips *at a reduced rate*
- Dental checks
- Suture removal
- Weight club
- Dietary advice
- Microchipping
- Flea and worm treatment advice
- 6 month checks for young pets
- Reproduction advice

Our qualified nurse is, **Joanne Collins RVN** (Head Nurse). **Josh Somers (SVN)** is a 2nd year Student Veterinary Nurse and works alongside Jo.

Our Nurses have undergone 2 years of veterinary nurse training and passed exams at each stage in both theory and practical tasks. Each year they have to take courses to keep up to date with new techniques (CPD).