

Expert information on medicine, behavior, and health in collaboration with a world leader in veterinary medicine

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Stray Dogs Understand

They respond to gestures

A new study found that dogs may have an innate connection to human behaviors. Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Kolkata, India, approached solitary stray dogs and placed two covered bowls near them. A researcher then pointed to one of the bowls, either momentarily or repeatedly, and recorded whether the dog approached the indicated bowl. They also recorded the perceived emotional state of the dogs.

Approximately half of the dogs did not approach either bowl. However, the researchers noticed that these dogs were anxious. The dogs who approached the bowls were noted as friendlier. Of these, 80% correctly followed the signals to one of the bowls, regardless of whether the pointing was momentary or repeated.

The results suggest that dogs may have an innate ability to understand certain human gestures. However, since the more anxious animals tended not to participate, future studies are needed to determine more precisely how an individual dog's personality affects their ability to understand human cues. ■

Bhattacharjee, D., et al. Free-Ranging Dogs Are

Capable of Utilizing Complex Human Pointing

Cues. *Frontiers in*

Psychology, 2020;

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fpsyg.2019.02818.



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Artificial Intelligence Detecting Addison's

Early diagnosis makes the prognosis better

Addison's disease is notorious for mimicking other health problems, which earned it the nickname "the Great Pretender." You may also see it called "hypoadrenocorticism." Addison's disease is a problem with the adrenal glands, causing a deficiency of aldosterone and cortisol, stress hormones that are essential for good health.

Addison's shows up in dogs with vague symptoms initially—vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy, and a loss of appetite. Many health problems, both minor and serious, can cause the same signs. Symptoms may have a cycle of waxing and waning, which makes it even more difficult to pinpoint. Many dogs are only diagnosed when they go into an Addisonian crisis and collapse. Bloodwork, urinalysis, and a special stimulation test to see if the adrenal glands respond properly are all part of the diagnostic workup. (See "Understanding Addison's Disease," June 2019.)

Veterinarians at the University of California at Davis Veterinary School have collaborated with electrical and computer engineers to develop an AI (artificial intelligence) program to help diagnose Addison's disease quickly and accurately. This new program claims to identify dogs with Addison's disease with an accuracy rate of 99%. If it proves true, this would mean faster and more accurate diagnosis with rapid treatment to follow.

"Anecdotally, we see dogs with Addison's disease come through the clinic, and they've been misdiagnosed for two to three years," says Dr. Krystle Reagan, a board-certified small animal internist with the UC Davis veterinary hospital. "Once Addison's is properly detected, though, it is generally easy to treat with an excellent prognosis for the patient."

"We set out to create an alert system that uses information from routine screening tests," Dr. Reagan continues. "The alert should be able to inform veterinarians when Addison's disease is likely, and prompt further investigation." The algorithm is said to be ready for commercial sales by the end of 2020.

The use of this AI algorithm may lead to more advances, such as with human Addison's. A new program looking at early diagnosis for leptospirosis is underway. "There is a lot of other exciting research currently surrounding AI looking at prediction of adverse events, identifying diseases, and monitoring disease treatment," Dr. Reagan said. ■

<https://www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/news/veterinarians-use-artificial-intelligence-aid-diagnosis-addisons-disease>

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"You cannot share your life with a dog . . . and not know perfectly well that animals have personalities and minds and feelings."

—Dr. Jane Goodall, world renowned primatologist and anthropologist



amydewar | iStock Photo

The Nose Knows

The canine nose proves to be invaluable to farmers

According to a report from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, dogs are showing that they have the “right stuff” when it comes to screening citrus orchards for citrus greening disease or huanglongbing. This problem is caused by bacteria and spread by insects that feed on the leaves and stems of orange, lemon, and grapefruit trees. Orchards in Florida, Texas, and California have reported cases. There is no cure, so an infected tree has to be removed.

Current methods of detection involve people collecting hundreds of leaves for laboratory analysis. But dogs, once trained to sniff out these bacteria, can detect them weeks to years before it shows up on the trees. Early removal means reduced chances of spread.

As well as being highly accurate, the dogs can move quickly through an orchard. Their accuracy reduces the need for expensive and time-consuming laboratory analysis, while the disease is spreading. ■



Fighting Glioblastoma

Research on dogs and humans shows benefits

Glioblastoma is a cancer of the brain and spinal cord. It is the second most common brain tumor in dogs and the most common in people. Dogs, especially brachycephalic dogs, have an increased risk of glioblastoma, and researchers are helping both dogs—and eventually people—with groundbreaking new studies.

Dr. Clifford Weiss, an associate professor of radiology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, is studying yttrium-90 (Y90) radioembolization, a treatment that has been successful with human liver cancer. With this therapy, he can deliver radioactive isotopes directly into the blood vessels that feed this cancer, shrinking the tumors. The treatment has been used on five pets, four of which showed initial improvement and no radiological or behavioral signs of glioma six months post-treatment, according to a report on NewsWise.com.

Constantinos Hadjipanayis, MD, PhD, of Mount Sinai-Union Square, is working with Robert Ivkov, PhD, from the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, on an iron oxide nanoparticle, which is injected into the tumor and then heated using a natural magnetic field. The treatment is being used on people in Germany, and this trial will begin treating dogs.

“These are powerful magnetic nanoparticles that we deliver directly into glioblastoma tumors by convection-enhanced delivery,” said Dr. Hadjipanayis. “We then apply a safe, alternating external magnetic field that oscillates the nanoparticles, which generates heat that destroys the tumor. Multiple treatments can be performed since the nanoparticles persist in glioblastoma tumors. When used in conjunction with radiation and chemotherapy, we expect this treatment will lead to improved outcomes.”

Researchers at Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine at Virginia Tech and University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine are using cytotoxins that specially target cancer cells, according to AmericanVeterinarian.com. A catheter is put directly into the tumor mass and then cytotoxins are slowly infused over hours to attack the cancer cells. The goal for the study is to improve the lives of dogs with brain cancer and use the canine spontaneous brain tumor model to then develop novel therapeutics for humans with this type of brain cancer. Since the trial began, treated dogs have fared better than controls. Lead researcher John Rossmeisl, DVM, at Virginia Tech said some of the tumors shrank, and some dogs lived a year longer than expected.

We pulled these studies because they are excellent examples of human medicine and veterinary medicine working together to benefit both species. Canine victims of this cancer get a chance at some new hope and, eventually, their efforts may help humans who suffer from this cancer as well. ■



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Let the Games Begin!

Choosing a safe and fun toy ensures fun for both of you

Whether your dog likes to chew, fetch, or tug, there is a toy for her! But not any old toy will do, and you should consider a few things when selecting a toy for your dog to play with.

Size

"Toy size is important and should correlate to the dog's size," says Leni Kaplan, DVM, MS, Lecturer in the Community Practice Service at Cornell University. "You do not want a toy that is so small they may accidentally (or on purpose) swallow it."

Labrador Retrievers in particular are notorious for swallowing anything they can get their tongues on, but any dog can have lapses in judgment. Choose a toy that is wider than your dog's muzzle from all angles.

A swallowed toy could get caught in the back of the mouth, blocking the trachea and choking him. Fragments that make their way down can damage the gastrointestinal tract, even lingering and causing an obstruction that would require surgery.

Shape

Dr. Kaplan advises, "Avoid using toys that have parts/pieces that can easily be ripped off and/or ingested (eyes, tails, feathers), and make sure that pets cannot get their mouths caught in the toy or the toy caught around their lower jaw." Your dog can still enjoy his purple octopus, but pick up the tentacles when he rips them off so they don't get swallowed.

Ring toys and ones with handles are the most likely to get stuck on your dog's lower jaw. Check that the gap is wider than your dog's jaw so he can grab and release easily. If your dog's mouth does



Often recommended by Dr. Katherine Houpt (see p. 8), this Kong toy can be stuffed with a watery mix of wet kibble and other foods your dog enjoys (like peanut butter). Freeze the stuffed toy, and you'll have a long-lasting toy.

get stuck on a toy, stay calm, and hold him still to gently remove it.

Composition

"Toy composition is important as well," says Dr. Kaplan. "Owners should avoid toys that are easily destroyed or fray as the small pieces could get caught in the dog's throat, and/or be ingested and cause a gastrointestinal obstruction." Thin rubber toys are easy to destroy, even for a small dog, but almost anything can be damaged by dedicated chewers.

On the opposite end of the spectrum is toys that are too hard. "Toys that are very hard can cause damage (including fractures) to the teeth," says Dr. Kaplan.

"Make sure that whatever toy the pet is playing with is soft enough that the owner can indent the surface with their fingernail. If they cannot indent the surface with their fingernail, the toy is too hard and will cause tooth trauma."

Supervised Play

"The advice I have for owners is to make sure to supervise their pet when chewing on toys, especially if the toy is new and/or unfamiliar to the owner," says Dr. Kaplan.

Watch how your dog plays to determine what toys are the best fit for him. Does he suck on plush toys, or does he shake and shred

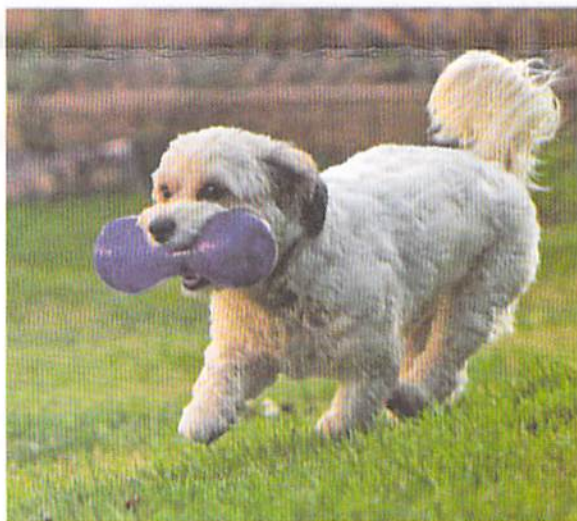
them? Does he carry a squeaky ball around casually squeaking it, or does he sit down to try to pin it in his paws so he can get a good angle for serious chewing? Even Destructo-Dog can enjoy playing with toys, but these dogs should always be supervised so you can intervene and pick up any pieces that are ripped or chewed off.

Don't Forget the Squeakers!

That squeaky sound that dogs love comes from a round piece of plastic that is squeezed by your dog's jaws. The squeaker is always smaller than the toy, and is a swallow risk if (or when!) your dog rips the toy open. Some dogs seek out the squeaker intentionally, surgically dissecting the toy and flinging stuffing in every direction until the prize has been revealed. Squeakers don't stand up to chewing and are quickly reduced to shreds. When your dog triumphantly brandishes a squeaker, tell him how great he is and trade him a treat for it.

Things We Love

"I am a fan of Kong toys, as they meet most of my toy requirements," says Dr. Kaplan. "The nice thing about Kong toys is owners can also stuff them with food and freeze them so they really provide good mental stimulation. I am a big fan of puzzle feeder toys—these are toys where the dog has to 'work' to access their food, which is another great way to provide enrichment and slow down the dogs who prefer to eat too quickly." Planet Dog and West Paw Designs also make durable toys in the United States. ■



This toy is a squeaker (OK, you can't hear it, but you can see the delight on the dog's face!) and it's wider than the dog's jaws, making it difficult to swallow.

What You Can Do

Don't use children's toys. They are not designed to stand up to a dog's play.

Rope toys can fray, so the dog can swallow dangerous strings.

Err on the large size, choosing a toy safe for your biggest dog.

Do not leave an unsupervised dog with a toy.

Hope Is High in Heart Failure

While heart failure is rarely curable, with treatment, most dogs can enjoy more years of good-quality life

If your dog is diagnosed with heart failure, it means your dog's heart can no longer pump enough blood through the body to maintain health.

Heart failure can begin as right-sided or left-sided but, with time, it can progress to both sides. Left-sided heart failure is more common in dogs than right-sided heart failure.

Heart failure is 1½ times more common in male dogs than females. Small dogs also tend to have a higher risk of heart failure than large dogs. The type of heart disease leading to congestive heart failure can vary with the breed and size of the dog, explains Cornell cardiologist Bruce Kornreich DVM, PhD, DACVIM.

Small breeds, such as Cavalier King Charles Spaniels and Toy Poodles, tend to get mitral valve disease. Large dogs such as Doberman Pinschers, Great Danes, and Irish Wolfhounds are more prone to dilated cardiomyopathy. Affected large dogs tend to have a faster progression of signs and a poorer prognosis. Many small breed dogs can go for years with a mitral valve murmur from regurgitation with minimal or no clinical signs evident.

The most common cause of heart failure in dogs is mitral valve



A dog who says no to walking may have a physical reason. Listen to him.

insufficiency, which leads to left-sided heart failure. Other causes include dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM), which you may remember from the FDA's investigation of grain-free dog food (studies on the cause are ongoing) and defects in major blood vessels of the heart. Congenital defects also may cause heart failure.

Symptoms

The right side of your dog's heart takes in oxygen-depleted blood and sends it to the lungs for reoxygenation. With heart failure on this side, blood does not circulate well and deliver oxygen-rich blood to the body, causing congestion in your dog's body (hence, the old term of "congestive heart failure").

The left side of your dog's heart pumps the newly oxygenated blood out of the heart and around the body,

replenishing all the tissues. Inefficient pumping leads to fluid backup into the lungs, which causes pulmonary edema and coughing.

Indeed, the first clinical sign of heart failure often is a cough. Coughing may be caused by the backup of fluid in the lungs (pulmonary edema) or pressure exerted on the trachea due to an enlarging heart.

The cough tends to be moist, as opposed to the dry cough of kennel cough. Dogs with heart failure will be less active, playing less and preferring short walks. They tend to tire quickly, especially if it is hot and humid. While coughing is associated with activity, it eventually occurs even when your dog is resting quietly.

Fluid buildup is another common symptom of heart failure. You might notice ascites, which is fluid buildup in the abdomen, or peripheral edema with fluid stocking up in your dog's legs.

As the heart failure progresses, many dogs lose their appetite. Between not eating and muscle wasting, dogs can progress to cardiac cachexia (muscle loss over top of the head, shoulders, back, and hindquarters). These dogs are thin but may falsely appear heavy due to fluid buildup in the abdomen. They pant, may prefer to rest with their heads held up, and go from healthy pink gums to pale or bluish tint gums from lack of oxygen.

Diagnosis

Your veterinarian will use a stethoscope to listen to your dog's heart and lungs, checking for a murmur (rough

What You Should Know

Early signs of heart failure:

- ▶ A persistent moist cough
- ▶ Reluctance to play or walk
- ▶ Fatigue, especially in warm weather
- ▶ Edema in the legs or abdomen
- ▶ Lack of appetite
- ▶ Muscle loss over topline
- ▶ Panting for no apparent reason
- ▶ Resting with his head up
- ▶ Bluish gums

Cornell Clinical Trial for Dogs with Arrhythmias

Irregular heartbeats, or arrhythmias, frequently occur in dogs with cardiac disease. They can hamper the heart's contractions, cause fainting, or even cause sudden death. Severe arrhythmias need to be managed with antiarrhythmic drugs, however, these drugs can have side effects and their efficacy is variable. Spironolactone is commonly used in dogs with heart disease to slow progression and has few side-effects. In people with heart disease, it decreases arrhythmia severity. The goal of this project is to determine if the same beneficial effect of spironolactone exists in dogs.

Eligible dogs must have had a diagnosis and heart failure treatment for less than 15 days or a new diagnosis of heart failure with controlled congestive heart failure after seven to 10 days of treatment. In addition, an arrhythmia must be documented before inclusion in the study. Owners will be required to give the spironolactone daily to their dogs for 10 weeks. Dogs must return to the Cornell University Hospital for Animals at five and 10 weeks after beginning the medication. If you're interested, discuss your dog's possible eligibility with your veterinarian. If he appears to be a candidate, email vet-research@cornell.edu.

sounds, versus clear beats) as well as any irregularities that may indicate an arrhythmia. In addition, your veterinarian will check your dog's pulse and look at his gum color and capillary refill time.

Most clinics have electrocardiograph (EKG) capabilities. The EKG can measure your dog's heart rate and the rhythm, based on the electrical activity of the heart muscle. Abnormal beats or signs of heart enlargement may be noted. The EKGs can usually be done with your dog awake but gently restrained. EKG leads are attached to different areas of his body. Your dog may also need an echocardiogram (an ultrasound).

Echocardiography uses standard two-dimensional, three-dimensional, and Doppler ultrasound to create images of the heart to evaluate anatomy, physiology, and function of the heart. Your dog will be quietly restrained on his side for the evaluation, then turned over halfway through. Many measurements of both structure and function are collected during the exam to be compared with normal values.

"The ideal workup for a dog with possible congestive heart failure would include an echocardiogram (usually with accompanying electrocardiograph), chest radiographs, blood pressure measurements for hypertension, and a blood chemistry panel to evaluate other

Grain-Free Correlation

It is still unknown what is causing the recent increase in DCM that the FDA believes is correlated with eating grain-free diets (particularly if they contain large amounts of pea protein and lentils). This is an example of correlation without proven causation.

In correlation, many dogs with a condition have a similar factor. That similar factor may or may not be causing the condition. For example, most dogs with DCM have two eyes. That does not mean that having two eyes is a risk factor for heart disease.

Causation means that researchers have identified the exact disease process and a risk factor that is linked directly to the disease. For some breeds with DCM, such as Boxers and Doberman Pinschers, the cause is known inherited predisposition.

body systems such as the kidneys," states Dr. Kornreich.

Obviously, these exams give your veterinary cardiologist a large amount of information to sift through. From this data, your dog's heart condition can be diagnosed, so an ideal treatment plan can be developed.

Treatments

The first line of defense is diuretics. These medications draw fluid out of the tissues. They can reduce edema in the legs, ascites in the abdomen, and edema in your dog's lungs. Doing so makes your dog more comfortable and reduces the workload for your dog's heart.

Different diuretics act in different ways. With any of them, you can expect your dog to need to urinate more frequently. Regular blood checks to verify that electrolyte amounts are staying within normal limits (since they can be excreted with fluid in many cases) and urine spot checks to make sure the kidneys are still doing well are important.

Furosemide (Lasix) is the most well-known diuretic, but some dogs respond better to diuretics with a different mode of action. Torsemide is a new diuretic being tried in dogs who have developed resistance to the common diuretics. It has a longer duration of action than some of the other diuretics.

Dogs with congestive heart failure also can benefit from angiotensin converting enzymes, commonly called ACE inhibitors. ACE inhibitors such as benazepril dilate your dog's blood vessels and increase blood flow, lowering the heart's workload.

Many dogs do well with the addition of an inotropic medication, which acts to strengthen the force of muscle contractions so your dog's heart can beat more forcefully. That means more blood is pumped and more oxygen gets out to the tissues. Some medications such as pimobendan (Vetmedin) act to reduce vascular resistance and improve contractility.

Long-term survival and quality of life tend to be best served by treating dogs in congestive heart failure with a diuretic, an ACE inhibitor, and pimobendan. Diet is also a consideration. Many dogs will benefit from a low-sodium diet.

Supplements such as taurine

Respiratory Rate

Keep track of your dog's condition by counting his resting respiratory rate. Most people find it easiest to count the rise and fall of the chest (that would be one count total) for 30 seconds and then multiply by 2 to get the respiratory rate. Most dogs are under 30 breaths per minute at rest. If the rate is consistently over 35, your dog may have problems. Learn the normal rate for your individual dog now, so that you can pick up on changes.

and carnitine may be recommended but shouldn't be added without your veterinarian's approval. Taurine and carnitine are amino acids associated with heart function. Boxers with DCM often benefit from carnitine supplementation and Cocker Spaniels and Golden Retrievers with DCM tend to do better if taurine is supplemented.

Prevention

Keep your dog fit and trim. Be sure to have annual physical exams for your dog (twice a year if over 7 years of age). Dr. Kornreich says, "Check your dog's normal resting respiratory rate periodically. If it is consistently over 35, schedule an exam. If your veterinarian detects a murmur, go the next step and schedule an echocardiogram."

With early detection, many dogs with heart failure can be successfully managed to have years of good-quality life. ■



Some dogs, like Border Collies, will play till they drop. It's up to the owner to watch for signs of fatigue and discuss abnormalities with a veterinarian.

Is It More Than “Just a Cough”?

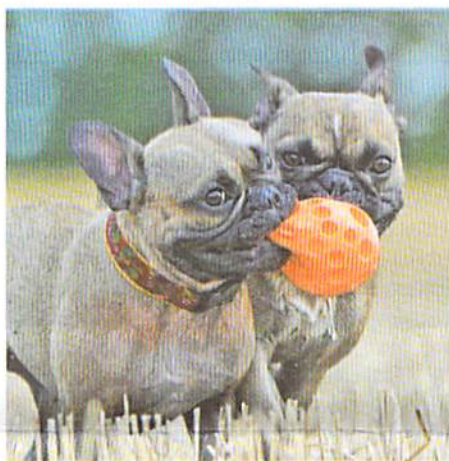
Any cough should prompt a veterinary visit

Canine cough, or kennel cough, as it is commonly called, is like a human common cold. The universal common sign is a dry, hacking cough. It is sometimes described as a “honking” cough, like a goose. Some dogs will sneeze, and there may be a clear nasal discharge. Symptoms usually appear two to five days after exposure.

If uncomplicated, kennel cough truly sounds worse than it is. Dogs with a simple kennel cough tend to feel good overall, but they will do that deep cough if exercising or pulling on a collar and irritating the trachea. Most dogs will cough for a week or two and then bounce back to normal. A coughing dog is in a contagious stage, although the most contagious period is right before the cough starts.

Causes

Infectious agents associated with canine cough can be bacterial or viral agents, including *Bordetella bronchiseptica*, parainfluenza virus, canine pneumovirus, adenovirus type 2, and *Mycoplasma canis*. Canine influenza viruses tend to be associated with a more serious respiratory illness and, generally, those



Shared toys can be shared germs.

dogs are quite ill and have a persistent moist cough.

The standard incubation period for a *Bordetella*-based cough is two to 14 days. Most dogs get infected from being somewhere indoors with a group of dogs. Indoor events concentrate possible infectious agents.

One coughing or sneezing dog could potentially spread the infection directly and by leaving droplets on shared toys, bowls, and bedding. Some studies suggest a dog could potentially shed organisms for as long as a month or two post recovery, depending on the strain.

If the cough progresses to pneumonia, your dog will be ill. Dogs with pneumonia may switch to a moist cough. These dogs are lethargic, may lose their appetite, and may run a fever. They often have a purulent nasal discharge. Pneumonia is potentially fatal, especially in young puppies, older dogs with other chronic health problems such as heart disease, and dogs of any age who are in poor condition or stressed.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis is made by a thorough physical exam. Your veterinarian will listen to your dog's lungs and may elicit a cough by gentle pressure on the trachea. He or she will check for a fever and rule out other possible causes. If there is any concern about pneumonia, radiographs of the chest may be recommended.

Treatment

Some dogs get cough relief hanging out in the bathroom while you shower, enjoying the “steam treatment,” or you can run an air vaporizer like people use for babies. Cough suppressants may help to relieve the dry cough, but never give any cough medicine without consulting your veterinarian. Not all human cough-relief medications are safe for dogs.

Switching from a collar to a harness for walks may help prevent any extra pressure on the trachea. Limiting physical activity to minimize coughing fits will help speed healing as well. If there is concern about the possibility of pneumonia, a course of antibiotics may be recommended.

Prevention

If your dog goes places where there are other dogs, a canine-cough vaccine makes sense. However, the vaccine does not cover every strain of kennel cough.

Parainfluenza virus and adenovirus 2 are often included in the basic vaccine for dogs along with distemper and parvo. This vaccine combo is recommended every three years after the initial series and first booster at a year. Canine influenza vaccine is given separately and is not a core vaccine.

Dogs who have been vaccinated for the respiratory syndrome may still pick up a cough, but symptoms are believed to resolve faster in most cases, and the period of shedding organisms is curtailed (sounds similar to the human flu vaccine, doesn't it?). ■

You Should Know

A coughing dog isn't necessarily battling just kennel cough. All persistent coughs should be evaluated by your veterinarian. A cough can be a symptom of an illness such as:

- ▶ Airway blockage
- ▶ Bronchitis
- ▶ Cancer
- ▶ Canine coronavirus
- ▶ Distemper
- ▶ Heart disease
- ▶ Heartworm
- ▶ Pneumonia
- ▶ Sore throat
- ▶ Tracheal collapse

Diagnostic Plan for Large Populations

The Canine Respiratory Diagnostic Plan (CRDP), developed by Edward Dubovi, Ph.D., professor in the department of Population Medicine and Diagnostic Sciences at Cornell, is a polymerase chain reaction test that can identify multiple agents in a kennel-cough outbreak. The CRDP is especially helpful if you're dealing with a multiple-dog outbreak of canine cough. The plan can identify the actual culprits, so a comprehensive plan can be devised for decontamination. You can learn more about this at <https://tinyurl.com/Cornell-CRDP>.

Stop Jumping on Me!

Methods to keep your dog's enthusiasm on the ground

Jumping on you is a common problem, especially with young, high-energy dogs. You can resolve this issue, but you must be consistent and have the whole family on board. Anyone who spends time with the dog must enforce the same rules the same way, including people who ask to pet your dog!

Good Habits from Day 1

Establish the ground rules the day you bring your dog home, so she doesn't develop bad habits in the first place. Rescues and rehomes may have some bad habits, but most dogs are on their best behavior when in a new place with people they don't know yet, which gives you a nice window of opportunity. Puppies are a clean slate, but their cuteness may tempt people to let them jump up. Stay strong! Large or muddy paws will not be as cute.

If you've had your dog awhile, don't worry. The techniques we discuss here will work—provided you're consistent!

Redirect

If you know your dog is in a situation where she is likely to jump up, give her something else to do. Ask her to sit and stay to be petted. Put her in a down or tell her to go to heel. Any trick or behavior will work, including spins, fetching a toy, or balancing a treat on her nose, but

choose one appropriate for your dog's energy level.

For example, an exuberant Labrador is likely to only get more excited if asked to go get her ball, so a stationary behavior is a better choice. The behavior should be something your dog knows well so that she will respond quickly, even when overstimulated.

Teach "Off"

Teach your dog the command "off," meaning to get her feet back on the floor. You can work on this both with people and objects/furniture but starting with an object usually helps to keep your dog calm for the initial learning process. Get a footstool or other solid object that your dog can jump up on and encourage her to do so. Then say, "Off," and lure her off the object. Reward when all feet are on the floor. Repeat several times until she is responding to your verbal cue. Once she has the idea, try it again with a different object or piece of furniture, always rewarding when she has all four on the floor. Then try it with a person.

Once your dog has mastered the concept of "off," you can use it preemptively when you know she is tempted to jump up to remind her what her job is.

Preventive Measures

Consider times your dog is most likely to want to jump up, and work to avoid those situations. For example, keep her in a crate or gated away from the door so you have a buffer zone when entering the house, then ask her to sit or down before you greet her. If she jumps up, turn away and ignore her for a few seconds or tell her to "off," if you've chosen that method.

When people are coming over, either crate/gate her or be prepared to meet them at the door so you can have your dog sit and stay while they come in and greet her. If she is very excited and may forget her sit and stay, put her on a leash to give you a

Why Your Dog Jumps Up

Most dogs jump up because they are overexcited, but others jump because they are anxious. In most cases, the dog is seeking interaction with the person. Happy jumpers may bounce on their hind legs trying to lick the person's face or rebound off the human's body. Anxious dogs are more likely to cling to the person, digging with their paws.

In either case, the dog is not regulating her own emotions and behavior. Your job is to set an example by staying calm and providing an alternative behavior that keeps you happy and addresses the dog's concerns.

If you sometimes allow your dog to jump up on you, you are not being consistent in your training.



little more control. Ask all guests to not pet her if she jumps up.

Don't Forget to Praise

The most important feedback your dog needs is when she is being good. Whenever she greets you in a controlled fashion or sits on command around a new person, praise and reward for a job well done. She will quickly figure out that keeping her feet on the floor and being treated and praised is much more enjoyable than jumping up. ■

A Word to Our Readers: DogWatch Mailing List Policy

Like many other publishers, we make portions of our customer list available to carefully screened companies that offer products and services we believe you may enjoy. Indeed, in all likelihood, we were able to first reach you only because another company graciously permitted us access to its customer list. If, when we make our list available, you do not wish to receive these offers and/or information, please let us know by contacting us at: DogWatch Opt-Out Program, PO Box 5656, Norwalk, CT 06856-5656. Please include your mailing label.



When your dog does as you ask, reward her! Once the behavior is established, you can reward less frequently, but in the early stages, that immediate reward is critical to her learning what you want her to do.

Help for Separation Anxiety

The first step is to rule out illness

Q My son's 5-year-old neutered German Shepherd, Fitz, lives with my son and a spayed female Shepherd. He is a beautiful dog. My son got Fitz as a pup and adopted Bells, the female, several years ago. The dogs got along well from the start. About a year and a half ago, though, Fitz started peeing in the house. When my son leaves for work, Fitz randomly pees, marking in the kitchen and basement.

My son has tried using plug-in calming therapy and even CBD, as suggested, to remedy the situation. Neither worked. We are at a loss as to what to try next.

I have had Shepherds before but have never run into this problem. Do you have any ideas?

A The behavior you describe may be separation anxiety. First, your son should take Fitz to his veterinarian to be sure that kidney disease or some other health problem is not causing Fitz to urinate more than he did.

The reason I suspect that the problem is separation anxiety is the indoor urination only occurs when your son is away. Sometimes, the canine appeasing pheromone (Adaptil) helps. You said he tried a plug-in calming therapy, but I am not sure whether he was using that or



Indoor urination that only occurs when you're away may well be separation anxiety, but you must get a veterinary examination to ensure it's not an illness.

another "calming" product. Nevertheless, it seems insufficient.

As for CBD, there have been no scientific studies on its usefulness for canine behavior problems, but several are being conducted, so stay tuned. In my opinion, it doesn't seem to help with canine anxiety because the dogs I see on CBD continue to have problems.

So, what should your son do? Once Fitz gets a clean bill of health, he should try these steps:

- 1) Do not punish the dog—not even verbally—unless you catch him in the act.
- 2) Do not give him attention when he demands it. Instead, pet and praise him when he is lying quietly away from you.
- 3) Give him a long-lasting treat, such as a Kong filled with soaked and frozen kibble topped with peanut butter. His companion dog should get one, too. Your son should give it to him as he leaves and take it away as soon as you get home.
- 4) Do not greet him exuberantly. Do not talk or look at him or pet him until he is calm, which means all four feet on the floor and quiet.

4) Practice "Stay," first standing right in front of him and then farther away. When he can sit and stay while you are out of the room, you can move on to leaving for a short time through your usual exit. By "short time" I mean 30 seconds or less. Gradually increase the time away.

Behavior modification alone can greatly reduce separation anxiety, but psychoactive medication is necessary for some cases and hastens recovery in most dogs with separation anxiety.

There are two drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration for treatment of separation anxiety: Clomicalm and Reconcile. Your son's veterinarian can prescribe one of those to help Fitz recover. ■

© HAPPENING NOW...

Award Winners—DogWatch is thrilled to announce the newsletter earned first place in the Dog Writers Association awards for "Canine or All-Animal Newspapers or Newsletters."

In addition, two DogWatch writers each earned a coveted Maxwell Award in "Canine or All-Animal Newspapers or Newsletters Article" because the judges felt there was no way to break the tie!

Debra M. Eldredge DVM, our technical editor, earned a Maxwell for her article "Understanding Addison's Disease," tying with Kate Basedow for her article, "Make Weight Loss Happen." Congratulations to both Deb and Kate! We couldn't be more proud! ■

Do You Have a Behavior Concern?

Send your behavior questions to Cornell's renowned behavior expert Katherine Houpt, VMD, Ph.D., shown here with Yuki, her West Highland White Terrier. Email to dogwatcheditor@cornell.edu or send by regular mail to DogWatch, 535 Connecticut Ave., Norwalk, CT 06854-1713.



Coming Up ...

- ▶ The Best Choices to Combat Arthritis
- ▶ Diagnosis: Mast Cell Tumor
- ▶ Therapies That Help Runny Eyes
- ▶ When to Opt for Wet Food Over Dry Food

No Limits to a Dog's Love



When 3-year-old Peyton Smith got in trouble for fighting with his 5-year-old sister, his mom gave him two choices: go to your room or have a time-out. Peyton chose the time-out and went to his spot with his head against the wall. Within moments, Dash, the family's English Mastiff, joined Peyton in his time-out. The story has been shared internationally by countless media sources.