

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

THIS JUST IN

Dog Jealousy Is Real

Even to a perceived threat

New research from the University of Auckland finds that dogs exhibit jealous behaviors even if they imagine their owner is interacting with a potential rival. Researchers presented 18 dogs with situations where they could imagine a social interaction between their human and either a fake dog or a fleece cylinder.



In the experiment, the dogs saw the fake dog next to their owner. A barrier between the dog and the fake dog obscured the view. Despite this, dogs forcefully attempted to reach their owners when the owner stroked the rival fake dog behind the barrier. In a repeat experiment using a fleece cylinder, the dogs pulled on the lead with less force.

Dogs showed three human-like signatures of jealousy: 1. Jealous behavior emerged when their owner interacted with a perceived rival; 2. It occurs due to that interaction and not just the rival's presence; 3. Even an out-of-sight interaction can cause jealousy. These results provide the first evidence that dogs can mentally represent jealousy-inducing social interactions.

Bastos, A., et al. *Dogs Mentally Represent Jealousy-Inducing Social Interactions. Psychological Science*, 2021; 095679762097914 DOI: 10.1177/0956797620979149. *Science Daily*.

Never Feed Grapes or Raisins

Discovery sheds light on why their toxicity varies

The dilemma of why grapes and raisins are toxic to some dogs and not others has long baffled veterinarians. The seeds, skin, and pesticides on the grapes have all been eliminated as the toxin. And, the exact amount needed to cause toxicity varies from dog to dog, making it difficult to predict if a dog will become ill after eating grapes. Due to the severe renal effects in susceptible dogs, sometimes leading to kidney failure or death, it paid off to treat all dogs who ate grapes or raisins.

Now four veterinarians—Colette Wegenast DVM and Irina Meadows DVM of the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center, practitioner Rachele Anderson DVM, and Cornell University pathologist Teresa Southard DVM, PhD—may have the answer. They presented their findings in a letter to the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, April 1.

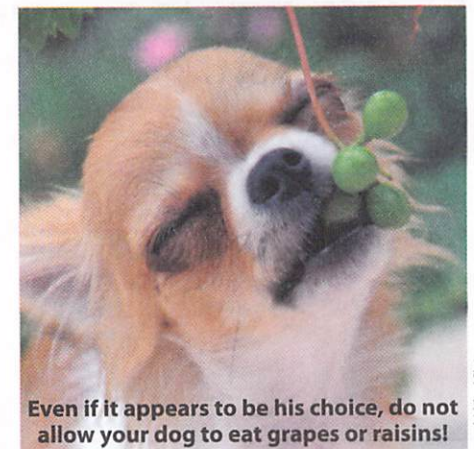
Dr. Wegenast was a consultant on a case involving a dog with symptoms of kidney failure who had eaten homemade playdough made with cream of tartar. Teresa Southard DVM, PhD, Associate Clinical Professor, Section Chief, Anatomic Pathology at Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine, provided the postmortem results: "The necropsy that helped to support the hypothesis that tartaric acid is the toxic principal in grapes was done at the Animal Health Diagnostic Center at Cornell, and the renal lesions were virtually identical to those described with grape and raisin toxicity in dogs."

Grapes and tamarinds (a tropical fruit) have high concentrations of tartaric acid and potassium bitartrate. Wine producers have long known that the exact amount of tartaric acid in a crop of grapes depends on the type of grape, how ripe the grapes are when harvested, and the growing conditions in their vineyards that season. This helps explain why it can be difficult to predict if dogs will get sick from eating grapes or raisins and why there is a huge variation in toxicity based on amounts consumed.

The Conclusion

The letter states: "We propose that tartaric acid and its salt, potassium bitartrate, are the toxic principles in grapes leading to acute renal failure in dogs. Variable concentrations may explain the inconsistency in clinical signs in dogs following grape and raisin ingestion. Furthermore, excess tartrates are removed (detartarated) from commercial wine and juice products to protect flavor and appearance. This removal of potassium bitartrate from processed products could account for the lack of toxicosis following ingestion of products such as juice, jam, and wine."

The bottom line: Do not feed your dog grapes or raisins. He may have eaten them before, but if you get a batch high in tartaric acid—and there is no way to know if it is—you may lose your dog.



Even if it appears to be his choice, do not allow your dog to eat grapes or raisins!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

COVID-19 and Myocarditis	2
English Bulldog Cancer Discovery	2
Osteosarcoma Immunovaccine Halted.....	2
When Happy Tail Becomes Sad	3
Plenty of Incontinence Solutions	4
A Fearful Dog Is No Fun	6
The Over-the-Top Excitable Dog.....	7
Phoebe Loves People.....	8
Mouthy Rescue	8
Happening Now	8

The Ingredient

Cream of tartar has potassium bitartrate, one of the salts of tartaric acid. Tartaric acid is safe for humans (it's in Snickerdoodle cookies!) and is considered safe in many lab animals. The few studies of dogs and tartaric acid are outdated, but we do know that dogs have a high absorption rate for potassium bitartrate and that they eliminate this compound primarily via the kidneys.

COVID-19 and Myocarditis

Reports from England raise questions

Recent reports from England suggest a possible connection between COVID-19 infections in dogs and cats and myocarditis (inflammation of the heart muscles). The cases revolve around the highly transmissible B117 variant that has become the dominant strain of the SARS-CoV-2 virus in the United Kingdom.

We know that dogs and cats can be infected with SARS-CoV-2. Some cases are asymptomatic, while some show respiratory illness. Infected pets that develop COVID-19 may show coughing, sneezing, and/or ocular nasal discharge. There is currently no evidence, though, that cats or dogs can transmit SARS-CoV-2 to people.

Between December and February, researchers at the Ralph Veterinary Referral Centre in Marlow, Buckinghamshire, noticed a surge in the number of pets admitted with myocarditis: 18 cases, nearly 10 times what they normally see. The pets that were referred in had symptoms suggesting heart disease, ranging from lethargy, lack of appetite, rapid breathing, and shortness of breath to severe life-threatening arrhythmias (irregular heartbeat). Two of the cases experienced collapsing episodes. Further tests revealed they all had myocarditis. None of these pets showed the classic respiratory signs usually seen in patients with COVID-19.

Most of the affected animals improved dramatically with cage rest, oxygen therapy and diuretic therapy, although one cat died while hospitalized. Some pets needed medications to stabilize their heart rhythms. In most of these cases of myocarditis, the owners of the pets had experienced COVID-19 symptoms or tested positive three to six weeks before their pet became ill. Many of the pets also tested positive for B117 variant of SARS-CoV-2.

So far, cases of COVID-19 in pets appear to be the result of pets being infected by their owners. These cases stress the importance of having help with pet care and taking protective precautions if you're infected with SARS-CoV-2. The research paper reporting these cases of myocarditis in pets infected with the B117 variant of SARS-CoV-2 has not yet been peer reviewed for publication. The researchers stress that, at this point, it has not been clearly established that the virus directly caused the myocarditis, but studies in humans suggest that this may be the case. ■



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English Bulldog Cancer Discovery

Dogs appear to have leukemia but don't

Some English bulldogs diagnosed with leukemia may instead have non-cancerous syndrome polyclonal B-cell lymphocytosis, researchers at Colorado State University found in a study about B-cell chronic lymphocytic leukemia. ■

Rout, E.D., et al. "Polyclonal B-cell lymphocytosis in English bulldogs" *Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine*, November/December 2020.

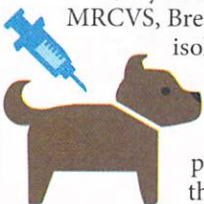


Osteosarcoma Immunovaccine Halted

Safety concerns were among the reasons, says Elanco

In April 2021, in "Osteosarcoma Amputation," we discussed an immunotherapy-based vaccine for osteosarcoma in development. Unfortunately, Elanco decided to stop pursuing FDA licensure, after evaluating the risks and probability of future success, says Veterinary Oncologist Joseph. A. Impellizzeri DVM, DACVIM (O),

MRCVS, Brewster, N.Y. There was a high frequency of adverse events, including isolation of *Listeria* from five treated dogs, creating a concern for zoonotic potential. If you're interested in immunotherapy, talk to your local oncologist, as additional immunotherapy options exist, including HER2 bound to a different carrier (adenovirus/plasmid) at Guardian Veterinary Specialists in New York and GD3 at the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine. ■



When Happy Tail Becomes Sad

All that exuberant wagging can result in an injury

One of the more common tail injuries is ironically called “happy tail syndrome.” It refers to a dog’s constant hard, fast tail wagging—with such exuberance that the dog repeatedly bangs against things like doors, coffee tables, and other hard objects. This injury is most common in dogs with short, tight hair coats like Great Danes and Greyhounds, but Labrador Retrievers are also prone.

“Dogs who are kenneled or kept in runs where they can continuously whack their tails against hard metal bars or fencing are at high risk,” says James Flanders, DVM DACVS Emeritus Associate Professor, Section of Small Animal Surgery at Cornell University’s College of Veterinary Medicine. Dogs can hit objects hard enough to cause an open wound. For repeat offenders, especially if they didn’t receive first aid and/or veterinary care, those wounds can develop into ulcers.

Immediate first aid involves placing gauze over the injury to control bleeding and keep contaminants out of the wound. Place folded gauze directly on the wound, then tape over the gauze and onto the hair. Lightly tape. You want to keep the bandage in place to control bleeding but not cut off circulation. Keep your dog from licking or chewing at the temporary bandage on your way to the veterinary clinic. Once there, the wound will be evaluated

to determine whether sutures or staples are needed. Then things get creative.

The delicate tail area needs to be protected because most dogs keep on wagging. “Covering the wound is really important. If a wound is left open, unless it is really small, it will be constantly traumatized by the dog sitting, wagging, or licking. Most dogs will need an Elizabethan collar along with the bandage in order to keep them from chewing off the bandage,” says Dr. Flanders.

“It’s important to gently clean the wound—even carefully clip the hair near the wound if it’s a long-haired dog to allow better access to the wound and to help keep it clean. Application of an antibiotic ointment covered by a soft gauze or application of a hydrogel dressing over the wound makes a good first layer. The second layer should be light and just enough to keep the

first layer in place. The final layer should be something tough and adherent, like Elastikon tape. Expect to replace the bandage often as it gets waggged off!” says Dr. Flanders.

“It is difficult to keep a bandage on the tip of a tail on a dog with a long, wildly wagging expression of enthusiasm! I always top off a minimally padded bandage with Elastikon for extra adhesion. For dogs with repeated bouts of this type of tail injury, amputation of part of the tail may be needed,” he says. Clearly, avoiding this scenario means a prompt trip to your veterinarian. ■



The Great Dane’s smooth-coated thin tail is easily injured.

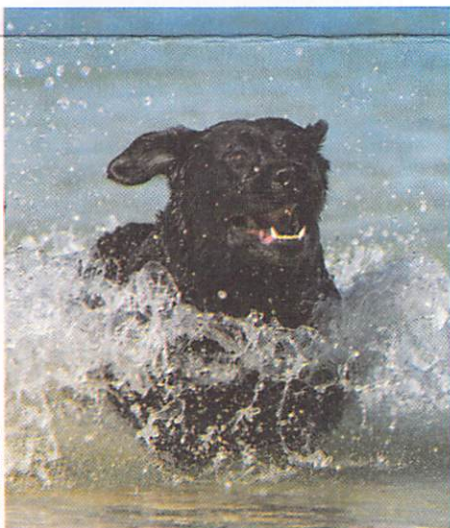
More Tail Injuries

Fractures: Fractures without open wounds may heal on their own, especially if near the tip of the tail. Closer to the body, some sort of support such as a splint may be required to help the tail heal properly. Crushing type fractures, such as the tail being caught in a car door, may require amputation due to damage to nerves, muscles, and blood vessels as well as broken bones. Symptoms include pain, swelling, oddly bent tail, reluctance to sit or wag his tail.

Loss of Skin: Degloving injuries can occur if the tail gets trapped under something that removes the tail skin. A dog whose tail gets trapped under a moving car tire might get a degloving injury. The best treatment here is often amputation, although you may not need to remove the entire tail.

Nerve Damage: If two dogs are playing hard and one dog grabs the other dog’s tail, you can get a neurologic injury from the hard yank. The tail may droop part way down its length and your dog may act painful if he tries to wag it or to sit. Although rare, the nerves that help to control bowel and urinary continence may be stretched and damaged. Generally, time is all it takes for healing. Your veterinarian may recommend some pain medications or an anti-inflammatory to help with the discomfort.

Dead Tail: Whether you call it cold tail, dead tail, or limber tail, it’s all the same: A tail that suddenly just hangs limply. This is usually noticed after a long day of swimming, especially if the water is cold. Literally, your dog has worn out his coccygeal (tail) muscles. Sometimes the tail will go out partway, then droop. You may notice your dog acting painful if he tries to sit and avoiding wagging his tail. Generally, rest is all you need for it to heal. While swimming is a main culprit, any dog, especially one that is not fit, can wear out his tail if he is wagging it as he runs or plays.



Labradors love swimming and water in general and can be prone to “dead tail.”

Plenty of Incontinence Solutions

If management won't work, consider meds or surgery

The most common cause of urinary incontinence in adult dogs is urethral sphincter mechanism incompetence (USMI), or urethral sphincter hypotonus. It can occur in puppies as well, second only to ectopic ureters (see sidebar) as a cause of incontinence in puppies.

In USMI, weak sphincter muscles allow for dribbling and/or involuntary urine loss. Many affected dogs have normal urination with occasional leaks. USMI is most common in older spayed females. Hormone-responsive urination can show up months to years after spay or neuter surgeries.

Symptoms include:

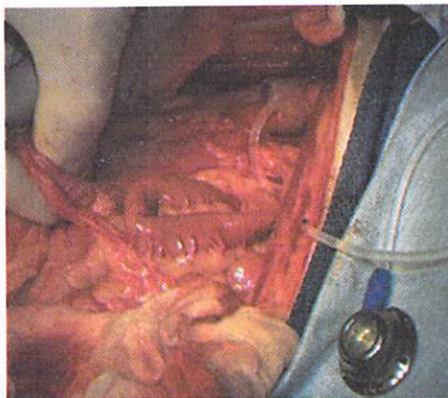
- ▶ Dribbling
- ▶ Involuntary urine loss
- ▶ Licking the vulva
- ▶ Offensive odor
- ▶ Skin scalding
- ▶ Urine spot or puddle left in bed

Poor urinary-tract muscle tone and the length and shape of the urethra can be factors, but there is no definitive answer as to why some dogs show incontinence. Many dogs battling incontinence have normal urination along with leaking.

Diagnosing a urinary problem will start with a urinalysis. Radiographs (x-rays) or an ultrasound may help to identify bladder stones or growths. A blood chemistry panel can indicate kidney problems or diabetes.

Hormone Treatment

Medical management is generally the first option. It's safe and reasonably effective, and USMI responds well to hormone treatment. Phenylpropanolamine (Proin) and ephedrine (Akovaz) increase the



An artificial sphincter is one of the most recent advancements in incontinence surgery.

tone of the smooth muscle in the urethra with a response rate of 74 to 92%, but often without stopping all the leakage.

An alternative is to use an estrogen to replace the hormone lost due to the spay. The synthetic estrogen drug diethylstilbestrol (commonly known as DES) results in improvement in 40 to 83% of dogs. Your veterinarian may recommend estriol (Incurin) or conjugated estrogens such as Premarin. For male dogs, testosterone may be prescribed, which shows improvement in about 40 to 83% of dogs.

Anticholinergic drugs such as imipramine (Tofranil) work on the bladder muscle itself, not the sphincter. Oxybutynin (Ditropan) or flavoxate (a popular generic) are other anticholinergics that may be prescribed. By relaxing the bladder wall muscles, more urine can be retained. Anticholinergics are usually used in combination with phenylpropanolamine.

GnRH (gonadotropin releasing hormone) analogues are less commonly used but can be effective in about 71% of dogs, including dogs that did not respond to the other medical treatments.

Surgical Options

When medical management isn't successful, surgery may be an option. These are complex procedures that will likely require a board-certified surgeon.

In a **colposuspension**, sutures are used to pull the bladder forward into the abdomen and increase pressure on the urethra through compression. About 50% of dogs improve, but leakage may not fully stop. This is an option for females.

Both males and females may benefit from a **cystourethropexy**. In this surgery, the bladder and urethra are moved forward into the abdomen and the urethra is sutured to the abdominal wall. This results in more pressure being required to cause urine flow out. About 50% of dogs show improvement. Most dogs who have this surgery need to go out to urinate flow more frequently than before the surgery.

A **urethral sling**, either a synthetic sling or one made from your dog's own tissue, can be placed to pull the urethra up against the pelvis to require higher pressure for urine to flow. Urethral slings have been used in women battling incontinence.

An **artificial urethral sphincter** is a new technique that mimics the artificial sphincters used in men with prostate problems. "In dogs, the sphincter is placed around the urethra surgically. By adjusting the amount of sterile saline placed in the inflatable sphincter via a vascular access port, the pressure around the urethra can be controlled. This may require some fine-tuning post op to get the ideal sphincter volume for an individual dog," says James Flanders, DVM, DACVS Emeritus Associate Professor, Section of Small Animal Surgery at Cornell.

Bulking Agents

A less-invasive alternative to surgery involves injecting bulking agents into the walls of the urethra. Polytetrafluoroethylene (Teflon) and collagen have been used. Overall, this technique reduces urine leakage in 53 to 68% of dogs. If combined with medical treatment, leakage is usually reduced even more. Unfortunately, the bulking agents can flatten with time and incontinence will return.

Galina Hayes, BVSc, DVSc, PhD, DACVECC, DACVS, Associate Professor Small Animal Surgery at Cornell uses the bulking technique on both male and female dogs, but male incontinence is much more unusual, and a more complicated surgical approach is required. Her success rate is high with 70% of dogs gaining urinary control without medications for an average of 17 months, and 20% become continent with the addition of meds. Approximately 10% fail completely.

"I have redone it in a number of dogs. Complication rate (other than incomplete efficacy) is very low. This

What You Can Do

- ▶ The maximum a dog can "hold it" is eight to 10 hours
- ▶ Never remove water as a solution
- ▶ Diapers work, but you must maintain optimal hygiene to prevent scalding or sores
- ▶ If a behavior could be the cause, consult a certified dog trainer



Belly bands for male dogs can take some experimentation to find one that stays in place.

can be done as an outpatient procedure which makes it attractive to owners. Dog needs a negative urine culture within 7 days of the procedure to minimize risk of infection,” says Dr. Hayes.

Surgeries come with inherent risks, including the need for general anesthesia and the risks of bleeding, infection, and incisional breakdown. A common complication from any surgery for USMI is difficulty urinating or not being able to urinate in the immediate post-op period. Luckily, this problem is usually temporary. A catheter can be placed short term if needed. Over time, however, this surgery’s effectiveness may decrease, which can lead to the return of some urine leakage.

Disease Influencer

Urinary incontinence can be a secondary health problem, especially with diabetes mellitus and kidney disease.

Most dogs battling diabetes or kidney disease have polyuria/polydipsia, which is excessive thirst and consumption of water. Not surprisingly, this can cause your dog, especially a senior dog, to have more “accidents” because the bladder fills quickly and he can’t get outside frequently enough.

Behavior Issues

Submissive urination is not incontinence. It is an involuntary release of urine when the dog is nervous or frightened. It is a normal pack behavior in that a submissive dog may roll over and urinate to avoid confrontation with a more aggressive dog.

Most often found in puppies, it can also be a problem in nervous adult dogs. (This should not be confused with excitement urination, which occurs when a dog—usually a puppy—becomes highly aroused.) With submissive urination, a nervous puppy may simply squat and pee.

Urination is normal at other times. Most puppies will outgrow this as they get more confident. Never correct a puppy or dog for submissive urination. It will only reinforce the dog’s lack of confidence.

Solutions to incontinence are boundless. The use of a diaper or belly band and/or taking the dog out to relieve himself more often have been used with great success. Medications can be highly successful, and there are surgical options. The most important thing to remember is that it is unlikely that any leakage, incontinence, or inappropriate urination in a housebroken canine is intentional. Punishment, anger, or “showing him the spot and yelling at him” will not work. Involve your veterinarian right away to get back on track. ■

Blood in Urine

If you see blood in urine, it is unlikely to be incontinence. The dog may not show other signs of pain or discomfort, but some possible illnesses require immediate veterinary care such as:

- ▶ Autoimmune hemolytic anemia
- ▶ Infection in the urinary tract
- ▶ Ingestion of a toxin
- ▶ Kidney or bladder stones
- ▶ Muscle damage or trauma
- ▶ Tumor/Mass

Ectopic Ureters in Puppies

A young puppy who has an accident is probably just not fully housetrained. Be patient. Take her out before she eats, after she eats, before bed, immediately in the morning, and at least every two hours. And be patient. Don’t grab her and bring her in before she’s urinated. You’re training her to understand that only outside is for potty. As she grows older, that time between outings will increase, eventually to eight to 10 hours, if necessary.

On the other hand, if your pup is leaking urine as she walks around the house or gets up and leaves a puddle behind her, she may have an ectopic ureter problem.

The ureters are tubes that run from the kidneys to the bladder, delivering urine. If one or both ureters have developed abnormally and connect to the urethra or vagina, the puppy will leak urine. If only one side is affected, your pup will urinate normally at times, but also dribble urine. With both sides involved, there will be frequent urine leakage. Ectopic ureters are more common in female pups.

“Puppies that walk and dribble urine constantly (do not posture to urinate) are suspect for ectopic ureters. Puppies that have urinary accidents 24/7 (at night, during the day, and so on) with no improvement in housetraining are suspected to have ectopic ureters,” says Leni K. Kaplan, DVM, Senior Lecturer, Section of Community Practice Service at Cornell University’s School of Veterinary Medicine.

“Puppies that do not have accidents overnight but have accidents during the day are likely having trouble with housetraining (owners tend to miss their cues or the pups are too excited to wait to go outside).”



With puppies, it’s highly unlikely one will stand up and say, “I did it!”

Diagnosis is usually done with a bladder dye study. Rarely, an abnormal opening into the vagina can be seen during careful examination under anesthesia. These puppies may have a secondary bladder infection. Treating the infection may help, but the underlying condition must be fixed. Rarely, the infection will have moved up into the kidney itself. The best solution is surgery to move the ureter back to its proper anatomical location. The sooner this is done the better. Surgery is curative.

A Fearful Dog Is No Fun

Strategies to prevent fearfulness in your dog or puppy

We all want our dogs to enjoy going places with us and friends we have in our home. We don't want our dog to stress in a corner or, worse, bite out of fear. While there is no way to guarantee that your new dog or puppy will not be fearful, you can stack the deck in your favor. Some of these strategies are easier to implement than others.

The best way to ensure that your dog will be happy and confident is to choose one who is genetically likely to have that personality. Research online the typical temperaments of breed(s) you are interested in and try to meet some of those dogs in person.

When considering a puppy, meet parents and relatives, if possible, to make sure that their personalities are what you are looking for. If getting the puppy from a breeder, the breeder should be able to give you detailed information on the puppy's relatives and may even have several at their house for you to meet. If getting a puppy from an "oops" litter, you may at least meet the mother. Friendly, confident parents are more likely to produce friendly, confident puppies.

Start Puppies Right

"The sensitive period for socialization in puppies is from approximately 4 to 14 weeks of age," says Pamela Perry, DVM, PhD, Behavior Resident at the Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine. "This is the time when puppies are most amenable to bonding with humans and other animals and

for learning that people, objects, and different environments are safe. Puppies who are not properly socialized during this period are at higher risk of developing fears in adulthood," she says.

"The important point is to expose the puppy to people, other animals, situations, and environments in a manner that does not frighten the dog," says Dr. Perry. "Not every puppy will be enthusiastic about meeting new people. Thus, every experience should be a positive one, staying within the limits of what the puppy can tolerate."

For example, you are walking your puppy around the neighborhood and a child runs up shrieking with excitement. Your puppy ducks behind you. This is not OK: The child is coming on too strong and your puppy is scared. To make the situation positive, ask the child to stop several feet away and sit on the ground quietly, then wait until the puppy goes up to her on her own. If your puppy is unsure about kids and you see a crowd of them headed your way, pick her up and change your route if possible.

When It Goes Wrong

Things don't always go according to plan. "Although puppies are more explorative and social during the socialization period, traumatic events during puppyhood can have lasting effects," says Dr. Perry. "If a puppy is severely frightened by someone or something, the owner may need to use counterconditioning

and desensitization to help alleviate the puppy's fear." Some examples of traumatic events are having a stranger fall on them, getting attacked by another dog, or being scared during a severe thunderstorm. Physical abuse and neglect also leave their mark.

Counterconditioning is the process of pairing a scary stimulus, such as thunder, with something positive, such as a favorite treat or toy.

Desensitization is the process of making that scary stimulus less scary and getting the dog used to it, such as playing a recording of thunder quietly and gradually turning up the volume a little bit each day. These two strategies take time and can be combined to help your dog get over her fear.

Thankfully, not all setbacks are true traumatic events. If your puppy is scared by something, such as a dropped pan, downplay the event and then move on to something positive. Say something like, "Well that was silly," pick up the pan, and ask your puppy to sit or do a trick for a tasty treat.

By not overreacting, you show your puppy that the dropped pan is no big deal. And by redirecting her with the trick and treat, you are refocusing her attention on happy things. ■

Study: City Dogs vs. Country Dogs

The University of Helsinki recently released a study looking at social fearfulness in dogs. Not surprisingly, the researchers found that inadequate socialization as a puppy predisposed dogs to becoming fearful as adults. But the researchers also found that fearful dogs were less active than their more confident counterparts and that dogs living in urban areas were more likely to be fearful than dogs living in rural areas. Further research is needed, but these early findings support the need for proper socialization.



Forcing your dog to confront her fear head on will simply further destroy her confidence.

Guiding the New Adult Dog

Picking out a dog from a rescue or shelter can be rewarding, but it can come with extra challenges. You will likely not know your new dog's background. The shelter staff will give you what info they have, but quirks and phobias may not appear until you get her out into the real world. Approach the first several weeks with your new dog just like you would with a puppy, providing her with safe, casual outings that allow her to see a little more of the world and you can see how she reacts. Use counterconditioning and desensitization training. Some dogs are bold as brass from the get-go, while others blossom over time with controlled excursions that show them that you can be trusted to always keep them safe and not scare them.

The Over-the-Top Excitable Dog

Exuberant dogs need a dedicated owner

Everybody loves a well-mannered dog. Puppy pre-school and formal obedience classes for all puppies and newly adopted dogs should be mandatory. But, for some dogs, it's just not enough. If you have an exuberant, excitable, high-drive dog, you are not alone, and we have suggestions:

1 Exercise, Exercise, Exercise.

Exercise doesn't mean the dog padding along beside you in a Gentle Leader for 20 minutes. It means fast, exciting, explosive running! High-drive dogs need an outlet for all that energy. A tired dog is a happy dog and a more easily managed dog.

The hard part is finding a safe place to do this. Ideally, the area would be enclosed with flat, non-slip footing to avoid injury.

Start with short sessions (five to eight minutes) to build muscle strength and agility. Work your way up to 20- to 30-minute workouts daily. If your dog doesn't naturally chase balls or Frisbees, try a ball you can stuff a yummy treat inside, such as a Lotus ball. If your dog doesn't bring balls or Frisbees back to you, bring a bag of them and collect them up after.

2 Nothing In Life Is Free.

If you have an exuberant dog who makes daily life difficult for you (like getting the leash connected to his collar or harness to go for a walk), adopt a "nothing in life is free" approach. With this method, your dog gets nothing—nothing!—unless and until he obeys a command. Anything that he values (going for a walk, eating dinner, playing with you, being let out in the yard, playing with another dog, greeting visitors at the front door, Kongs, rawhides, whatever) he does not get until he obeys a command.

All you need to get started is a solid "sit" command. Once he is happily sitting on command, use that in your nothing-in-life-is-free program.

First, do not make the mistake of repeating the command. (How many times have you already tried, "Sit, sit, sit, sit, SIT, SIT, SIT, I SAID SIT!!!!!!") Give the command once and then wait. If he



Funneling your dog's energy and brains into a dog sport like flyball can be fun for both of you.

continues his crazed, excited jumping around and/or barking, quietly remove the reward and ignore the dog. Hang up the leash, or put the Kong back in the cupboard, and go read your book.

Once he settles, try again. If he fails again, abort again. This may require many attempts before he understands that if he wants to be given what he wants, he needs to obey the command to sit.

Be sure to have a couple of hours set aside the first time you try this. Be patient, consistent, and persistent.

3 On My Terms.

While similar to nothing in life is free, "On my terms" is specific to play situations. If your dog goes crazy pulling on the leash when he sees another dog he's been allowed to play with, redirect his attention back to you with a treat or other favorite reward. Then ask him to sit. Once he sits and waits politely, release him to the reward, which is his friend. He will soon learn that he doesn't have to bulldoze his way to what he wants. You are teaching your dog that calm behavior will be rewarded.

4 Give Him a Job.

Most exuberant, high-drive dogs are also highly intelligent. Putting the dog to work channels energy into intellectually stimulating, physically challenging, fun activities. Your dog's preferences, and your own, will dictate which sport you choose.

Dog agility provides your dog with mental stimulation and allows for explosive physical exertion. It's fun for you, too, and you don't have to run like an Olympic sprinter to do it.

Other organized mentally and

physically stimulating activities include hunting, tracking, obedience/rally, flyball, lure coursing, barn hunt, and dock diving. You can learn more about these activities at akc.org.

5 Appropriate Equipment.

The go-to device for exuberant dogs is the Gentle Leader. It has a loop that goes over the nose, and a second loop that goes around the neck and sits high behind the ears. It works on behavior principles, which is different than devices like the prong collar, which uses pain/discomfort avoidance to achieve the desired behavior (never do that!). With the Gentle Leader,

when the dog pulls, it puts pressure on the top of the nose and the top of the head, thereby bringing the dog's head down and back, into a submissive posture. This posture is in direct contrast to the upward and outward posture of your lunging, jumping, excited dog. The Gentle Leader tempers the dog's exuberance and encourages calmer behavior.

If you are going to try it, start with a simple desensitization training process before trying to walk your dog in it. Start by just showing him the Gentle Leader. Leave it on the ground and let him check it out. Give him lots of praise and cookies when he is near it. Pick it up. If he will come forward and sniffs it or touches it with his nose, give him cookies. Once he is happy touching it and getting rewarded for that, try offering the cookie through the nose loop. Once he's happily pushing his nose through the nose loop and allowing the nose loop to sit on his nose, hook the other loop around his neck. Make sure both loops are loose at this stage. Once he's happily wearing the Gentle Leader this way, you can tighten the loops until properly fitted. Keep rewarding. Once he's happily wearing it this way, you can go for your first walk. Bring lots of cookies and reward your dog for his good behavior.

These tips are designed to help you balance your exuberant dog's wild zest for life with good manners.

Remember patience, consistency, and persistence are the keys, along with lots of exercise and rewards for the behaviors you want. Any time you have behavior and/or training issues it is always a good idea to engage the help of a qualified, force-free professional. ■

Phoebe Loves People

She simply cannot control herself and her excitement

Q We have the sweetest, most loveable dog, Phoebe. She is a pure delight! Our only problem is she is now 6 years old (we got her at 8 weeks), and we are 85 and 88 years old. She loves people and goes nuts when we have a visitor. She is all over them! We have been to multiple training sessions with different trainers and have tried, but I realize we aren't consistent with her. Can you give us a hint of what we might do that is easy to remember?

She walks well on a leash and is crate trained. I know it is us, but as we get older I am so afraid of trying to hold on to her when she is trying to give loves to anyone who enters our house. She is only 40 lbs., but when she is excited she is a handful. Thank you for any suggestions you may have, and I promise we will be consistent this time. Paws and kisses from the three of us.

A You are obviously enjoying your golden years and are good role models for 82-year-old youngsters like me. You must be very capable to have trained Phoebe to walk on a leash and enter her crate.

In order to solve her over exuberant greeting behavior, I think you can take advantage of modern technology. Put a sign on your door saying, "Don't knock or come in. Please call or text and we will

put Phoebe away before we let you in." You should contact your more frequent visitors and tell them of your new plan. You might have to put window cling on the windows she uses to spot visitors so she doesn't realize they are coming.

Because Phoebe is crate-trained, we can take advantage of that. When someone says they are coming or are at the door tell Phoebe to go to her crate. Give her a long-lasting treat like a stuffed, frozen Kong so she will be content. If you think she would become vocal if she hears people come in, position the crate in a room far from the front door and turn up the volume on the radio there to muffle the sound of visitors. Paws and kisses to you and Phoebe, too. ■

Mouthy Rescue

Needs the release rewarded

Q I have a 2-year-old female rescue dog. I have had her for over a year. Sometimes when I try to pet her, she mouths my hand. She mainly does it when she gets excited or wants to play. She has toys to chew on. I have tried to teach her "no mouth," but it didn't work. What should I do?

A You are very kind to adopt a 2-year-old dog but, of course, you weren't there to improve her manners when she was a puppy.



If your dog didn't learn the difference between a chew toy and your skin as a puppy, it's not too late to start teaching her now.

Mouthiness is a common problem in puppies, but this has persisted in your dog far beyond puppyhood. We shall have to find a new word for "remove your teeth from my skin."

The next time she mouths you just stay still until she loosens her grip and then give her a toy (if she is in a playful mood) or a treat. After you have done that 10 times or so, you can begin to use a word such as "Out!" The idea is that you use her release as the rewarded behavior rather than trying to punish her with a loud voice. This is the method that attack-dog trainers use to train their dogs to release on command.

Now, of course, it would be better that she did not mouth at all, so be sure that she has a variety of chew toys, like stuffed ones, bones, tug toys (but you must always wait for her to stop tugging before you let go), and food dispensing toys. Be consistent in your training. Good luck! ■

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 ...

- ▶ Old Dog Disease: Vestibular Syndrome
- ▶ Knee Injury Therapy Brace vs. Surgery
- ▶ Anaplasmosis Is a Tick-Borne Illness
- ▶ Those All-Important Warm-Ups

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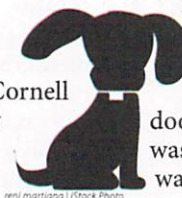
COVID-19 Vaccine—Russia has registered the world's first COVID-19 vaccine for animals. Clinical trials of the vaccine, called Carnivac-Cov, involved dogs, cats, Arctic foxes, minks, and foxes.

Fake Supplements—Today's Veterinary Business says counterfeit calming supplement Zylkene was sold by a third-party seller on Amazon as 75-milligram capsules in 120-count bottles, lot 048019 and the expiration date 05/2021.

Cancer Research—The Petco Foundation awarded \$75,000 to Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine for cancer treatments for dogs and cats.

Cosmetics Animal Testing Banned—Maryland has prohibited new tests of cosmetics on animals and ended sales of all new cosmetics tested on animals starting July 2022. The news comes less than a month after Virginia's Gov. Ralph Northam signed a similar bill.

He's a Hero—Florida Sheriff Deputy Jeckovich smashed down a front door to get a dog out of a home engulfed in flames, according to multiple sources. The homeowners were not at home, and the officer heard "scratching from behind the front door." The dog was covered in ash but was otherwise unharmed. The home was a total loss. ■



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