

# IS YOUR DOG AFRAID OFFIREWORKS?

## Signs of Firework Phobia:

- Barking
- Unable to settle, wandering around looking anxious
- Hiding under/behind furniture
- Climbing on your knee
- Panting/whining
- Constantly clingy
- Won't go outside when is normally happy to go for walks

Many people soothe and give lots of attention to their pets at this time of year. However, when faced with anxious situations, pets look to their owners for guidance on how to behave. If a pet is reassured and soothed when they are doing the above actions, it reaffirms to the animal there is something to be worried about, making them act out their fears even more.

## Firework season is approaching. Are you prepared if your pet shows any of the above behaviour?

Things you can do to help your pet through the fireworks: Other things you can do to help your pet:

- 1) Carry on with life as normal – rules for your pet stay the same ie; sleeping and eating arrangements etc.
- 2) If your pet climbs on your knee during the fireworks, either ignore it completely or stand up and leave (try not to use your hands as this is a form of interaction with your pet).
- 3) If your pet goes and hides behind or under furniture, just leave them there as they will feel safer. If there isn't anywhere for your pet to hide, then make a small dark place for them to go into if they feel the need.
- 4) Do not cuddle, stroke, or talk to your pet when it is doing any of the above behaviour.
- 5) Turn up the TV or radio to mask the noise.
- 6) Take your pet out for exercise at times when it is very unlikely that fireworks will go off.
- 1) Several months before bonfire night, you can use a recording on the internet of firework noises starting off quiet and gradually becoming louder over a period of days to desensitise your pet to firework noise.
- 2) A week before bonfire night you can use:
  - i) An adaptil or feliway diffuser which releases pheromones into the environment to help your pet feel calm. It needs to be plugged in, within a room where you expect your pet to spend a lot of time in for a few days before the loud periods.
  - ii) Non-sedative oral medications which helps your pet feel calm. We would recommend having these provided from a reputable pet shop or from ourselves. E.g. Zyklene.
- 3) If your pet panics as soon as the fireworks start and suffers severely with stress during these times, please discuss with ourselves about having sedatives prescribed. If we have not seen your pet recently, we may need them to come in for a health check before we can supply this for you to give at home.

Make sure that all family members consistently follow these rules to avoid your pet becoming confused.



### Contact Information

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