



## Storm / Noise Anxiety in Dogs

Thunderstorm phobia and anxiety over loud noises are common problems in our pet dogs. Some dogs show signs of anxiety only when storms are nearby, while others have the same problems even if they just hear fireworks or a car that backfires in the area. The typical signs can include restlessness, trembling, whining, salivating, panting, hiding and/or destructive behavior. This problem has the potential to be life-threatening, especially in older dogs, because of rapid heart rate, poor breathing patterns and elevated body temperature.

Because the phobia tends to worsen over time, we recommend treating affected dogs sooner rather than later in life. Something as simple as wearing a tight T-shirt can help some of these dogs remain calmer. Other times we recommend the use of DAP, a calming pheromone, which can be purchased from Pro Feed Pet Nutrition Center here in Vienna. In some cases we'll use homeopathic products or human anti-anxiety medications. Each case is different, so if your dog shows signs of anxiety, please discuss it with the doctor at your next visit.

## HARD: An Emerging Syndrome in Cats

Heartworm Associated Respiratory Disease (HARD) is a syndrome that is becoming more commonly seen in the US. It's caused by heartworms, which we commonly consider a dog parasite. Cats can get the worms but usually have a very small number of the parasites in their body. The worm is transmitted by a mosquito, which injects microscopic larvae into the cat's body. The larvae mature over months to become 4- to 12- inch adults. Over this time, they live in the lung vessels and create lots of inflammation. It's this vessel damage that causes the signs we see in HARD. Symptoms can include reduced appetite, coughing, blindness, diarrhea, vomiting, seizures or sudden death. Heartworm infection is a little more difficult to diagnose in cats than in dogs, but lab tests can help us identify infected pets.



[www.knowheartworms.org](http://www.knowheartworms.org)

For cats at risk for heartworm infection, we recommend the use of a monthly heartworm preventive. All cats are considered "at risk", but indoor/outdoor kitties are the most likely to be infected with heartworms. HARD has been diagnosed in 100% indoor cats, however, so no cat is completely safe. Preventive options include pills such as Interceptor, Sentinel and Heartgard or a topical product such as Revolution, which also prevents fleas and ticks.

Please join us and support the first annual  
Beau's Walk of Courage...Walking to Save Pet's Lives  
to raise awareness and funds  
to support *The Animal Cancer Foundation*

1-mile fun walk for people and their dogs!  
Sunday, October 5, 2008 8:30-11:00 A.M.  
Fairfax Corner in Fairfax, VA

Cost: \$20.00 per person by September 28, 2008  
(\$25.00 the day of the event)

Dogs are free!

For more info: <http://thenextbestthingpetcare.com/>



## Weather Tips

### Allergy Season...

Autumn is usually a common time that allergies arise in our pets. Following are some signs that may identify that your pet has allergies:

- face rubbing
- feet licking
- butt scooting
- belly scratching
- head shaking
- irritated skin
- areas of hair loss



Please contact us if you see any of these signs!

### Arthritis

Cold, damp weather can aggravate arthritis in dogs and cats just as it can in humans. Animals that are overweight or have suffered injuries, such as a bone fracture, may also be more susceptible. If your dog or cat is having trouble standing up, lying down, or navigating stairs, or if the animal snaps or cries when picked up, we recommend you visit us immediately. Never medicate your pet with human prescriptions or over-the-counter medications without consulting your veterinarian first. One Tylenol tablet can be fatal to a cat.



### Cold-Weather Caution

Assess your pet's condition, age, level of exercise and weight and make adjustments for the cold.

Inside pets need less food (to offset a decrease in activity), and outside pets need more (keeping warm requires energy, and food is the fuel). Cold weather is especially tough on older pets. For elderly animals, it could be wise to help out by putting a sweater on them.

## Welcome to Our New Neighbors!

Pro Feed [www.profeedpet.com](http://www.profeedpet.com)

Vienna Pet Spa [www.viennapetspaw.com](http://www.viennapetspaw.com)





## Help for Fearful Patients!

In response to our fearful dog and cat patients, we've been looking for an effective, safe and short-acting sedative that's easily administered. Sedation is best for these types of patients because they're often aggressive only because they're terrified, and they feel that they're fighting for their lives. Of course, our goal is not to terrorize our patients, so sedating them is merely in their best interest. We've found an injectable combination sedative that is proving to be very effective. The best part about this drug, called Domitor or Medetomidine, is that it's reversible, meaning we can give an injection of another drug to reverse the effects of the sedative. In this way, we can sedate our fearful and aggressive patient, complete a thorough physical exam/take blood/trim nails/clean ears/take x-rays/bandage legs/etc., and the pet can leave the hospital under its own power just a few minutes later. Although any sedative carries some risks, in healthy pets, this medication is very safe. It's not to be used if the patient has any sort of heart disease, however. We are proponents of tranquilizing fearful pets because of multiple reports across the US of dogs and cats that have died while being restrained for procedures. It's well established that when pets' cortisol level is high their heart races, they struggle, and their heart and lungs are under tremendous strain, which can produce potentially dangerous heart rhythms (arrhythmias) and may be fatal. Sedating these patients is much better for their system than struggling with them.



### *Tips for Keeping Your Companions Healthy*

- ♥ Bring your animal to the vet annually. Senior animals should be seen every six months.
- ♥ Don't overfeed. Obesity creates health problems and shortens life spans. Your vet should provide an ideal weight for your pet.
- ♥ Provide adequate exercise.
- ♥ Attend to your pets' dental health. Brush their teeth daily and have them cleaned professionally whenever your vet advises it.
- ♥ Vaccinate your pet!
- ♥ Be diligent in controlling fleas and ticks, and keep your pets and their environment scrupulously clean.
- ♥ ***Make your pets as much a part of your life as possible, and do all you can to keep them interested, active, happy and comfortable.***

According to Veterinary Pet Insurance for 2007...

### *Top 10 reasons dogs were taken to the veterinarian:*

1. Ear infection
2. Skin allergies
3. Staph infections/hot spot
4. Vomiting
5. Diarrhea
6. Urinary tract infections
7. Benign skin tumors
8. Eye inflammation
9. Osteoarthritis
10. Low thyroid levels



### *Top 10 reasons cats were taken to the veterinarian:*

1. Urinary tract problems
2. Vomiting
3. Chronic kidney disease
4. Diarrhea
5. Diabetes mellitus
6. Skin allergies
7. Constipation
8. Ear infections
9. Respiratory infections
10. Elevated thyroid levels



### *Are You Looking for a New Companion Animal?*

If so, visit: [www.petfinder.com](http://www.petfinder.com).

A large number of animal rescue organizations in our area are listed on this site.

You can pick the type of pet you are looking for and search for it in your area! Dogs, cats, guinea pigs and even iguanas are listed on this site.



Visit us at:  
<http://www.ovvhpets.com>