



When life is too loud....

Fear and anxiety in response to noise (termed noise phobia) is one of the most common behavioural concerns in dogs, and often worsens over time.

Approximately 50% of dogs react fearfully to sound. For more serious cases there is now a product available which enables owners to medicate their dog safely at home. SILEO is a fast acting oral gel applied to your dog's cheek and gums (it is not ingested). It contains a mild sedative which calms your dog and reduces anxiety. Your dog remains completely normal during treatment which can be given every 2 hours up to a maximum of 5 times during each noise event. As SILEO is a prescription only medication, it will be necessary to have a health check with a vet prior to dispensing the gel.

From September however, we are offering 20% OFF the cost of the health check consultation and Sileo Gel.



A video showing how easy it is to administer Sileo is available to view on our facebook page

Winter is coming !

With darker nights drawing near, we would like to remind you all that there are increased dangers out there especially for dark pets who may not be instantly visible. There are a range of reflective products available for both you and your pet to make walking safer. Black cats particularly are at higher risk of road traffic accidents, and reflective collars are very sensible.



It will soon be that time of year again when we can expect tonnes of whizzes, bangs and other loud noises. As fun as they can be, there will be many pet owners watching their panic stricken pets climb the walls or cower under sofas. So what can be done to help these poor pets?

The use of **Adaptil** (Dog Appeasing pheromone) (in dogs) and **Feliway** (in cats) in conjunction with a few simple changes can really help.

1. Plug an **Adaptil/Feliway** diffuser in the room that your dog/cat uses to relax and rest two weeks before the event.
2. Build a den where your pet feels safe and comfortable. Cover with a blanket if appropriate, to muffle sounds further. Cats feel more comfortable high up so may benefit from their den being raised. This should be done a few weeks in advance so they get used to settling there. It is important for them to be able to hide away.
3. Walk your dog earlier in the day before fireworks are likely to start.
4. If your pet is not sick when stressed, feeding a larger meal high in carbohydrates, in the early evening can help to leave them content and sleepy.
5. Mask the sounds by playing music with lots of drum beats. Close curtains and distract with interesting games or toys.
6. Don't punish or reassure your dog if he is scared. This just confirms that there is something to be scared of!

Remember, even pets who are unfazed by fireworks should not be allowed to watch them. Every year pets are accidentally injured by bonfires and fireworks, and noise phobias frequently develop. **Always check under bonfires for wildlife before lighting them**

There are various other options to deal with anxiety.

Thundershirts are a close-fitting vest that apply gentle pressure on certain points of the dog's torso helping to alleviate anxiety. It works in a similar way to swaddling an infant and is generally considered highly effective. **Thundershirts** come in various sizes so please ring to make a FREE appointment with one of our nursing staff for your pet to be measured for these.



Zylkene capsules are another alternative for dealing with anxiety. This is a natural product derived from casein (a milk protein) that is well known to promote relaxation. **Yucalm** is a newer alternative and already shows promise. Both should be started well before the event.

Sileo gel is a fast acting oral gel which is applied to the cheek and gums of dogs and contains a mild sedative. See our offer box to the left for more information on this product. Once the firework season is over, a desensitisation programme is the best way to treat noise phobias. The training is similar to programmes that police dogs and horses go through before being put into public work situations. Please ask for more information.



'Your local caring vet'



“Hear Hear”

Bacterial and yeast infections in the ear canal are a very common problem in dogs, and also occur to a lesser extent in cats. Dogs with dangly ears or ears that are particularly hairy or moist are especially pre-disposed to infection. Allergies are also an increasingly common cause of ear infections.

Two classic symptoms are pawing at the ear or shaking the head excessively. There may also be redness or swelling and a strong odour. If your pet shows signs of these symptoms or you think there may be a problem with his ears then please contact us for an appointment, as ear infections can be very painful.



After an examination we will often take a sample to look at down the microscope and thereby identify which, if any, organisms are present. It is likely that a course of medicated ear drops will be prescribed along with an ear cleaner to remove wax and debris from the ear canal. Certain types of bacterial infection are commonly resistant to every day antibiotics, so it is sometimes necessary to send a swab to the laboratory to identify the bacteria in question and help choose an appropriate antibiotic preparation. There is also now a long acting preparation which we can apply at the surgery – 2 doses 1 week apart. This is very useful for dogs who don't like their owners applying ear drops at home!

Key to preventing infections is keeping the ears clean and dry. Dogs often get their ears wet either through swimming or playing in water and this causes a warm, moist environment which is ideal for yeasts and bacteria to thrive in.

If your dog is wet, dry his ears as thoroughly as he will tolerate, taking care NOT to insert anything into the ear canal itself. Excess hair can also remain wet and tangle causing discomfort. Dogs that swim regularly or those predisposed to ear disease may benefit from regular cleaning with an appropriate product. We recommend you book an appointment with one of our nurses who can show you how to help maintain ear hygiene. Ear plucking can also be useful for dogs with hairy ears.

Dry eye

Dry Eye syndrome is extremely common and often goes unnoticed. It affects up to 1 in every 22 dogs. Breeds particularly affected are Westies and Cairn Terriers, Cocker Spaniel, Brachycephalic (flat faced) breeds such as Bulldogs and Pugs, Yorkshire Terrier, Miniature Schnauzer, Boston Terrier, Dachshund, Chihuahua, German Shepherd Dog, Doberman Pinscher, English Springer Spaniel, Lhasa Apso and Shih-Tzu. However, any dog can suffer with Dry Eye.

Dry eye is a term given to a condition called **keratoconjunctivitis sicca** or KCS (not to be confused with a King Charles Spaniel!!) It is a painful and potentially dangerous condition caused by the inadequate production of tears. There are many different reasons for this but whatever the main cause, the eyes of affected animals become dry, red and inflamed, and often get secondary bacterial infections. Dogs with dry eye have varying degrees of discomfort, ranging from mild to extremely severe. It can be difficult to detect in the early stages which is why we check eyes as part of your pet's annual health check. As the condition worsens over time a corneal ulcer can form. This is an extremely painful condition which, if left untreated, can potentially result in the total loss of vision or even the eye itself. Symptoms to watch out for include:

- Pawing or rubbing at the eyes
- Conjunctival redness
- Dull, dry appearance to the cornea (or outer surface of the eyeball)
- Discharge, often sticky and green
- Sensitivity to light
- A partially closed eye due to pain
- Swollen, inflamed eyelids
- Squinting
- Excessive blinking
- Impaired vision



There is a simple test called a Schirmer Tear Test to establish diagnosis which is quick, painless and cheap to perform. Treatment in the early stages will usually include topical products such as artificial tears and antibiotic drops if required. Anti-inflammatories and sometimes steroidal treatment (if there is no ulcer present) can be prescribed too in some cases. There are also surgical options available for more serious cases.

Prevention is difficult as there are so many different causes of dry eye. Good hygiene and a healthy diet are important but regular health checks with your vet are essential as any problems can be identified quickly and managed accordingly.

Banstead Village Veterinary Surgery

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