



# **Behavioural Problems in Dogs and Cats Mini Series**

## **Session 2: Fear of Loud Noises in Dogs**

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## **Introduction**

The human psychiatric definition of phobia is “irrational fear that is out of proportion to actual level of threat”. Animals cannot recognise whether or not what they are experiencing is a genuine threat, so this definition is unusable in the veterinary context.

It is better to focus on the functional and observable features of phobic fear that differentiate it from normal adaptive fear.

Phobic fear is:

- Intense and out of context so that it limits normal behaviour.
- ‘All or nothing’; once a certain threshold of exposure is exceeded, the fear expressed becomes very intense and unrelated to the intensity of the stimulus. This threshold can be very low, so that the animal’s response seems to us to be disproportionate to the stimulus intensity.
- Persistent long after the actual threat has gone away.

So, dogs with noise phobia, as opposed to normal fear, show greater anticipation of noise events, increased sensitivity to low-level presentations of the sounds that they fear, an emotional over-reaction, and delayed recovery.

Fear of loud noises is very common in dogs. In recent survey for the RSPCA, 49% of UK dogs were found to exhibit some degree of fear of firework, thunder or gunshot noises (Blackwell et al, 2005).

In humans, the prevalence of phobias is approximately 10%, with most being related to objects and animals rather than sounds. It is unlikely that 49% of dogs have a fear of loud noises that is of sufficient severity to be described as phobic. Many may be mildly fearful, or have shown fear in situations of noise exposure that were so intense that any dog would be expected to show some degree of emotional reaction. It is likely that only a small proportion would be genuinely phobic.

## **Progressions of symptoms in fears and phobias**

Fears and phobias may become more problematic over time, due to:

- Increasing sound sensitivity
- Generalisation
- Learning and generalisation of cues that predict a forthcoming noise event (such as weather conditions or the smell of bonfire smoke).
- Experience of situations in which the dog was unable to predict a noise event and perform a coping behaviour.
- Experience of situations in which the dog was unable to perform an escape or avoidance behaviour (often as a result of confinement).

The animal's ability to perform coping behaviour has a significant impact on whether a problem improves or gets worse. A proper escape response has several components:

- Localise the origin of the fearful stimulus.
- Move away from it along a decreasing gradient of exposure.
- Seek refuge in a location where exposure is perceptibly lower.
- The context of the refuge should be perceptibly different from other locations.

Animals also derive greater sense of escape if the location they escape to is different from the one where the noise event was experienced.

### **Use of an online questionnaire for case assessment and detection**

The most important issues when evaluating fears of loud noises are:

- How severe is the dog's reaction?
- Is the problem severe enough to indicate a need for treatment with medication (including long-term medication)?
- Is the chosen treatment, and management, effective?

An online Sound Sensitivity Questionnaire (SSQ) has been developed in order to address these issues.

### **The scale**

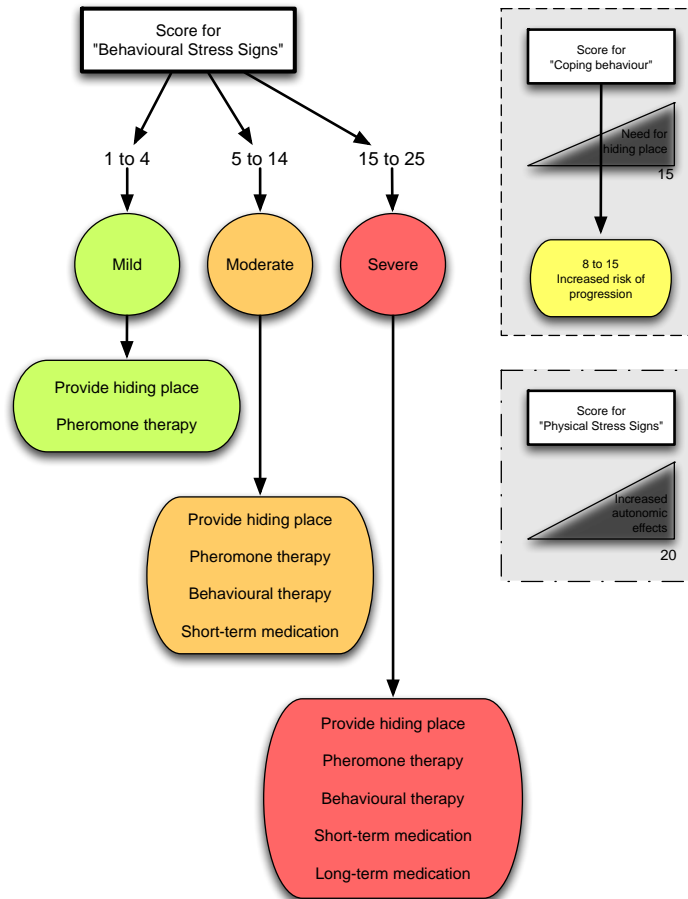
For a test to be useful it needs to be statistically valid and have test-retest reliability. If a test does not have retest reliability, it cannot be used to measure response to treatment over time. The SSQ is statistically valid and retest reliable, so it can be used to assess severity and treatment response over time.

There are three main parts to the scale:

- Behavioural stress signs
- Coping behavior
- Physical stress signs

The SSQ has been used to profile a population of cases in order to determine whether it consisted of subgroups with different levels of reaction to noise. It was found that cases fell into three statistically distinct categories; “mild”, “moderate” and “severe”. The score of behavioural signs of stress is able to accurately discriminate between these groups.

### Sound Sensitivity Questionnaire



### Behavioural stress signs

The main part of the scale relates to behavioural signs of stress, such as trembling, panting, and restlessness. After completing the test, each patient receives a score of 0 to 25, with higher scores indicating higher levels of behavioural signs of stress during an event.

- Mild reaction: Score of 1 to 4.
- Moderate reaction: Score of 5 to 14.
- Severe reaction: Score of 15-25.

Severely affected individuals will exhibit some autonomic signs, such as salivation. They also showed significantly higher sensitivity to very low intensity sounds, greater anticipation of noise events (anxiety in response to rain or other predictors of a noise event), and delayed recovery after an event has finished. These are characteristics that are consistent with a concept of noise phobia; an abnormal and maladaptive reaction

to loud noises. Approximately 34% of those dogs with a clinically significant fear of loud noises were severely affected. Within the study population this equated to about 13% of dogs having a severe response, which is in line with the prevalence of phobia in humans.

Dogs in the severe category are more likely to need treatment with long-term medication, such as selegiline or a serotonin reuptake inhibitor, as well as behavioural therapy (desensitisation and counter-conditioning).

Mildly, and moderately, affected dogs will benefit from the provision of a hiding place and behavioural therapy.

### **Coping behaviour**

Based on their pattern of coping behaviour, moderately fearful dogs could be statistically divided into two subgroups; those with a passive coping strategy (repeated attempts to hide, low body posture and freezing) and those which had an active coping strategy (making deliberate attempts to get to a specific hiding place, or showing an antagonistic reaction to the source of the noise).

The “coping behaviour” subscale assesses the level of passive coping behaviour so that dog’s coping style could be determined. This part of the scale includes behaviours that are indicative of the dog’s coping behaviour. These include repeated attempts at hiding, low body posture and freezing behaviours.

Higher scores for this subscale (range 0-15) indicate that the animal is less able to find a suitable coping strategy, because it shows postural signs of fear and repeated, unsuccessful, attempts to find a suitable hiding place. Those dogs which had scores of 8 or more were more likely to have got worse over time, indicating that within the moderately fearful group the coping style of the dog was an indication of future severity.

This is useful when assessing moderately fearful dogs in order to determine the best course of treatment, as it prevents clinicians from overlooking cases that are on a trajectory toward phobia.

Dogs are more likely to have high scores on this part of the scale if they are unable to find a suitable hiding place. This may be an indication that the owner has not provided permanent access to a hiding place. It can also indicate that the owner has prevented the dog from hiding. This is an indication that the owner needs to guidelines on providing a dog with a suitable hiding place, such as those in the attached client handouts.

Since this part of the scale has high retest reliability, it can be used to determine whether the owner has made the correct changes necessary to enable the dog to cope better with noise events.

### **Physical stress signs**

This includes several questions that relate to much more severe reactions such as vomiting, defecation and urination. These are signs of a stronger autonomic response to stress, and high scores for this part of the scale (range 0-20) are indicative of an extreme emotional response. These are individuals whose welfare is potentially severely impaired during noise events.

The main value of this part of the scale is that for cases which have obtained higher scores (or a maximum score of 25) for the behavioural signs of stress, this part of the scale provides additional information on autonomic effects. As would be expected, dogs that are classified as “severe” based on their score for behavioural signs of stress also have higher scores for physical signs of stress.

It also acts as a secondary check, helping to detect cases that are genuinely severe but which show moderately high scores for behavioural signs of stress because they may have progressed to show a panic reaction during noise events.

### **Additional questions**

The scale also includes specific questions on how long the dog takes to recover after an event, the minimum intensity of sound the dog reacts to, and whether the dog shows anticipation of an event by reacting anxiously to sounds such as rain.

- Anticipation: Range is 0 to 10. Higher scores indicate that the dog reacts more intensely to events that predict a forthcoming loud noise event.
- Recovery: Range is 0 to 4. A score of 3 or 4 is an indication of a markedly prolonged recovery after an event has ended.
- Minimum sound to cause a reaction: range is 0 to 4. A score of 4 corresponds with the dog reacting to noises that the owner can hardly hear. Dogs that show this kind of reaction are likely to have a larger number of negative experiences.

These scores provide further information about a particular case, but they do not have any specific diagnostic value.

### **What the scale does not include**

The scale does not include questions about the types of noises the dog reacts to, or the frequency of noise events that frighten the dog. This is because these are specific to the individual animal and its environment.

However, the frequency of fearful noise events the dog experiences is critical to the impact that fear will have on its quality of life. A dog that shows moderate reactions to loud noises and experiences several fearful events each week may require medication every bit as much as a dog that reacts more severely but is exposed to events less frequently.

It is important to ask the client to list the sounds the dog reacts to, including:

- Fireworks, gunshots and thunder.
- Everyday noises in the home (kitchen equipment, doors slamming, noises on TV/radio).
- Everyday noises outside (traffic, machinery).

Dogs that react to a wider range of noises are more likely to experience a higher frequency of fearful events.

## **Monitoring efficacy**

### *Behavioural stress signs*

For most cases, the behavioural stress signs part of the scale is sufficient to monitor response to treatment, but in very severe cases physical signs can also be helpful.

This part of the scale can be used to monitor effectiveness of:

- Management (provision of a hiding place, use of Adaptil)
- Short term anxiolytic drugs.
- Long term behavioural or drug therapy.

The change in behavioural signs score can be related to whatever combination of therapy is contingent on a particular event. A reduction in score is expected if treatment is effective. This may be large enough to shift the individual between severity groups.

The aim of any medication should be to reduce behavioural and physical stress signs whilst leaving other behaviour unaffected; the dog should be able to move around and perform normal self-maintenance behaviours such as eating, drinking and elimination.

The SSQ uses behaviour as an indicator of the emotional impact of a stressful noise event. If behaviour is so heavily suppressed through sedation that all other normal behaviour is also suppressed, then it becomes difficult to determine whether underlying emotional responses have been changed.

However, it can still be used to monitor the effect of such sedatives on subsequent exposure, to compare severity of response before and after a period of sedative use.

The scale also enables the clinician to set a goal for therapy.

## **Detecting cases**

Clients tend not to seek help until behaviour becomes problematic to them. This means that a significant proportion of mildly and moderately fearful dogs will be experiencing recurrent stress that could be alleviated through simple environmental modification and behavioural therapy.

Experience with the scale in the UK indicates that clients are sufficiently interested in finding out about their pets that even those with very mild problems are still attracted to complete the scale online. This makes the SSQ a good tool for early problem detection.

A link to it can be forwarded to clients during the 8 weeks prior to a known loud noise event or season of loud noises events, so that they can seek effective advice at a time when the widest possible range of treatment options is available. Long term medication, for example, takes several weeks to become effective and some dogs need to be trained to make use of any hiding place that is prepared for it.

## **Management of dogs with noise phobias**

The key aim of management is to prevent emotional responses from getting worse and to enhance the animal's ability to cope while other treatment is undertaken.

General advice includes:

- Avoid any predictable fearful noise exposure.
- Not to restrict access to escape routes unless there is a very important reason to do so. Increase opportunities for the dog to hide and control its own noise exposure.
- Not to try to comfort a fearful dog or get angry with it when its behaviour becomes disruptive, because either of these actions will add to the emotional intensity of the situation and will increase the likelihood of future problems.
- Not to force animals to confront their fears by, for example, cutting off opportunities to hide or dragging them to places where they are reluctant to go.

Even though this advice has been commonplace for years, a significant proportion of owners still soothe dogs, or use punishment.

It is common for owners to be advised to “ignore the dog” when it is showing signs of fear during a noise event, but this is also potentially problematic. The sudden change in the owner’s behaviour, cutting off all interaction, can become an additional source of stress that is associated with the loud noises. There is a high level of comorbidity between noise phobias and separation anxiety (SA), and for dogs with SA a sudden reduction in owner interaction will be even more distressing. It is better for owners to be advised to interact normally with the dog as if nothing is happening. They should not try to soothe the dog, but they should not completely ignore the dog either.

Many dogs have already learned an appropriate escape response that takes them to a place in the home where the sound level is reduced and they feel safer. This is usually in a room with small windows and something sound absorbent that the dog can get inside, underneath or behind (e.g. heavy furnishings such as a bed or sofa).

Some dogs will go to such places and then come out again and search for somewhere else. This is because, although the level of sound in the first escape place is lower, it is not sufficiently reduced to enable the dog to feel any abiding sense of relief. As the fearful event continues, the dog becomes more fearful again and has to find another hiding place.

The dog can be helped by improving the quality and availability of the refuge. Modifications might include:

- Putting up heavy curtains to block sound and light from outside.
- Keeping windows closed.
- Providing a pile of old blankets or a piece of furniture for the dog to hide under.
- Putting on background music that helps to disguise what is going on outside.
- Installing an Adaptil® diffuser close inside the place where the dog hides.



This kind of bolthole is only used as a means of *managing* phobia, because the aim is to teach the dog to ignore sounds and not to constantly seek the refuge. However, if the dog is elderly or suffering from cognitive problems, it may not be possible to completely desensitise and counter-condition so a refuge may be an appropriate permanent means of management.

## **Behavioural therapy**

### *Desensitisation and counter-conditioning*

- Desensitisation is used to reduce fearful and phobic reactions to stimuli. After a large number of neutral presentations of the stimulus, it ceases to produce a significant emotional effect.
- Counter-conditioning is used to create a new and positive emotional response with the desensitised stimulus. After being counter-conditioned, the same stimulus is paired with events that produce an unconditional positive emotional response that conflicts with fear. Typical examples are food and play.

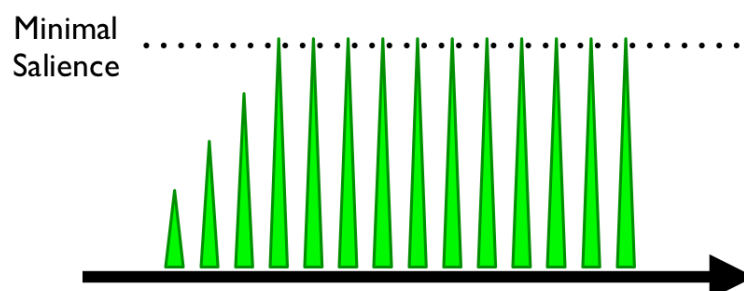
The ultimate result is that, every time the stimulus is experienced, there is an emotional swing toward a relaxed and happy emotional state that is in direct conflict with the fear that was previously present. This has a blocking effect that reduces the chance of re-sensitisation and generalisation. Desensitisation and counter-conditioning therefore work in concert to reduce and replace the conditioned emotional response of fear and can be used to treat any fear or phobia problem. Where there are fears or phobias of multiple stimuli, it is best to treat each one separately and divide any complex stimulus into several more easily treated individual components. For example, the visual and audible stimuli associated with traffic or the different noises experienced during a storm or firework event.

Desensitisation is a reversible process that needs to be backed up by counterconditioning. However, unlike desensitisation, counterconditioning is a context specific type of learning; if a dog is counterconditioned in a single context that learning will not necessarily be transferrable to other contexts. Counterconditioning therefore needs to be performed in 3 or more distinct contexts in order for its effects to become generalised.

### *Practical aspects of desensitisation*

First, the precise desensitisation stimulus must be identified and differentiated from other stimuli that may also evoke a response. Next a way must be found to reduce the intensity of this stimulus to below the threshold that produces an emotional response. In the case of sounds, this is easily achieved by using a recording of the sound the dog is afraid of.

For desensitisation to be effective and non-stressful for the dog, the stimulus must be minimally salient; the dog should initially notice that the object or sound is present but must not show signs of fear or anxiety.



For desensitisation, the sound should be presented at an intensity that is minimally salient: it must not generate an emotional response.

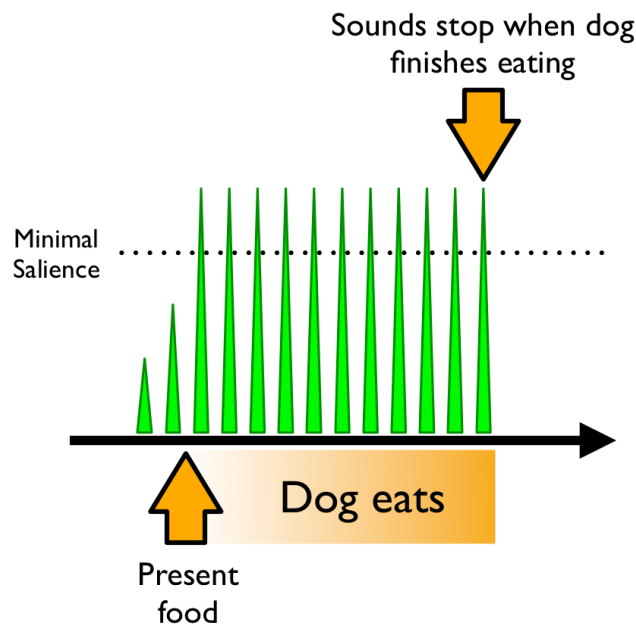
The dog is exposed to the attenuated stimulus for short periods of 5-10 minutes, several times each day until it barely notices when the stimulus is presented. At this point, the level of the stimulus is increased to the minimally salient level again and the process is repeated, i.e. the sound volume is turned up or the test object is replaced with a bigger version or the object is brought slightly closer.

This cycle is repeated until the dog can tolerate the full stimulus without reacting emotionally. At this point the dog is desensitised, but this process is easily reversed. A sensitising or intensely fear-eliciting experience with the stimulus may cause the dog to revert to fearful or phobic response. The training is carried out in a number of different contexts, including those most relevant to the fear or phobia. In reality, it is often very difficult to progress smoothly from fake or attenuated stimuli to real ones and ingenuity may be required.

*Practical aspects of counter-conditioning.*

Before beginning counter-conditioning, there must be minimal reaction to the stimulus at the intensities at which it will be presented during training. If the emotional response to the stimulus is anywhere near as great as the emotional response to the unconditional stimulus we are trying to associate with it, then the response will be negligible. If the emotional response to the fearful stimulus is actually greater, then we may condition aversion to the other unconditional stimulus.

Counter-conditioning should only start once the dog shows no reaction to recorded sounds that can be presented at a salient level. The typical procedure is to start feeding the dog as soon as the sounds reach salience, and then stop playing the sounds as soon as the dog finishes eating.



It is very easy to create the wrong conditioned response; making the dog fearful to eat because its meals are associated with frightening noises. This is particularly likely in dogs with phobia, and is why counterconditioning should be preceded with desensitisation.

### *The owner's response to the dog*

Many owners either try to soothe the animal or get cross with it when it becomes fearful. Both responses are wrong because they result in increasing the intensity of the emotional experience or rewarding inappropriate behaviour. It is best to encourage owners to ignore the animal's fearful behaviour but then reward it when it shows signs of recovery. A good refuge will help with this because many owners are forced to intervene when the animal digs or damages furniture in an attempt to find relief from fear.

#### **Drug therapy**

Drug therapy can be used as a short-term strategy to enable a patient to deal with an inevitable event or circumstance, or as a long-term treatment, which assists in the application of behavioural modification techniques over a period of weeks and months. The aim in these two scenarios is very different and the drug classes that are appropriate will also differ.

#### ***Short term drug therapy***

The traditional pharmacological approach to treating fears and phobias in dogs has been the administration of sedatives and tranquillisers. These drugs make the animal less reactive, and remove the symptoms of fear that owners find so distressing.

Benzodiazepines are the preferred short-term licensed preparations for use in managing acute emotional responses to fearful noise events. The most frequently prescribed example was formerly diazepam, but in the UK it has largely been superseded by the triazolobenzodiazepine drug alprazolam.

Benzodiazepines have a short half-life of a few hours, which limits their usefulness as a long-term drug in behavioural medicine, but, in acute-phase management of sound sensitivity, it can be very effective.

The amnesic effects of benzodiazepines make these drugs ideal as short-term therapy. Alprazolam may be given at very low doses either before, during or after a noise event because it causes retrograde and anterograde amnesia. This can be very useful for blocking memory of individual events that occur during therapy and might initiate a relapse.

It is important to consider the potential for human abuse and to be wary if prescriptions are being refilled too frequently, if the owner reports the use of increased doses to gain the same effect, or if the owner repeatedly claims to have mislaid or lost medication.

The potential for paradoxical agitation and ataxia in dogs given benzodiazepine drugs means that the first dose should always be administered as a test of response at a quiet time with the owner present.

If used for long periods, benzodiazepines do carry a risk of withdrawal symptoms on cessation of the medication and gradual decrease in dosage is recommended. Relapse is also a potential issue when using benzodiazepines and therefore they should only ever be considered as a short-term approach to cases.

#### ***Long term drug therapy as an adjunct to behavioural therapy***

In cases where the problem is seasonal it is beneficial to start behavioural therapy at a time when the symptoms are less likely to be seen, but this is not always convenient or feasible. Long-term drug therapy is used for several reasons:

- To improve response to behavioural therapy.
- To alleviate debilitating effects of phobia, such as contextual avoidance and generalised anxiety.
- To reduce further generalisation and acquisition of new phobias.
- To improve the welfare of the animal.

Long-term drugs take 4-8 weeks to begin to produce an effect, so in some cases concomitant short-term therapy may be considered.

### ***Tricyclic Antidepressants (TCAs)***

The most commonly used of the TCAs in veterinary behaviour medicine is clomipramine. The UK license in this case relates to the specific condition of separation anxiety rather than sound phobia.

The use of the TCAs in the treatment of behavioural disorders is widespread but their use in phobia treatment is largely limited to the mild to moderate cases in which anxiety is a major factor. Individual TCAs vary widely in their specificity for blocking the reuptake of noradrenaline versus serotonin and these differences should be taken into account when selecting medication.

Although chemically a member of the family of tricyclic antidepressants, clomipramine (Clomicalm<sup>®</sup>) is technically classed as a serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SRI) since it is moderately selective for the blocking of serotonin reuptake. All TCA drugs have a range of anticholinergic and antihistaminic effects that are largely responsible for adverse effects.

### ***Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors***

These drugs are more selective in their inhibition of serotonin reuptake and they have been advocated for the treatment of noise-fears with a panic component.

The most commonly used SSRIs in veterinary behavioural medicine are fluoxetine, fluvoxamine and sertraline. Those with increased selectivity (fluvoxamine and sertraline) have very little anticholinergic or antihistaminic effect and are therefore better tolerated. Specifically, the reduction in seizure threshold and effect on urinary retention is lower in these drugs.

The drug sertraline has been used successfully in the treatment of sound phobias in dogs, but it is not licensed for use in any non-human species. The risks of behavioural disinhibition should be considered and TCAs, SRI and SSRIs should not be used in cases where there is any history of canine aggression.

### ***Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitors (MAOI)***

The UK licensed MAOI in veterinary practice is selegiline (Selgian<sup>®</sup>). This drug is licensed for use in behavioural disorders of an emotional origin including fears and phobias. Monoamine oxidase (MAO) is responsible for metabolising the monoamine neurotransmitters (noradrenaline, serotonin and dopamine). Two forms exist: MAOa and MAOb. MAOa is responsible for the breakdown of serotonin and noradrenaline, MAOb breaks down dopamine.

Selegiline, being a selective inhibitor of MAOb, increases the availability of dopamine for synaptic transmission. It is not totally selective and there is some inhibition of MAOa as well. For this reason selegiline and TCA/SRI/SSRI drugs must not be given concurrently or even within 2 weeks of each other. Apart from these neurochemical effects, selegiline also has antioxidant and neuroprotective effects that make it useful for the treatment of cognitive dementia.

Clinical experience suggests that selegiline is effective in the treatment of sound phobias associated with behavioural inhibition and symptoms of social withdrawal. In multi-dog households selegiline has been associated with an increased assertiveness within the hierarchy and the literature suggests that selegiline should not be used in households where there has been pre-existing reporting of status related behavioural issues between the dog and the owner.

## **Client handout: Helping your dog during loud noise events**

### **Hiding place**

You should already have provided a hiding place for your dog. Make sure that this is accessible at all times.

### **Before the event starts**

Some loud noise events are predictable; you may have advanced warning of a thunderstorm or firework display.

- Give your dog a stodgy, high carbohydrate meal about an hour before you expect the event to start. For example, a portion of overcooked rice or mashed potato, mixed with a little of your dog's usual food for flavour.
- After the meal, take your dog out to go to the toilet.
- Then make sure that windows and curtains are shut to help reduce sound levels.
- Turn on some loud music that will help to block out any noises that come from outside (don't do this if your dog does not like loud music).
- Put a chew or bone in your dog's hiding place, as an encouragement to go there (don't do this if your dog aggressively guards chews and bones).

### **During the event**

- Your dog may seek reassurance from you, but it is important that you don't try to soothe or comfort your dog.
- Don't get cross with your dog, even if his/her behaviour becomes disruptive and annoying.
- Regularly check on your dog while he/she is in the hiding place. Offer gently praise and some food treats while your dog stays in the hiding place.
- If your dog comes out of the hiding place, encourage him/her to go back there, perhaps by offering some food treats.
- Try to act as a good role model; stay relaxed and calm.

### **After the event is over**

When your dog has come out of hiding after an event has passed, it is tempting to show a lot of attention and encouragement, but it is better to continue to ignore your dog until he/she has fully settled down.

We want to encourage the dog to use the hiding place until he/she feels fully relaxed to come out. If we show a lot of attention too soon after the dog has come out of hiding, this works against what we want the dog to learn. Dogs that have been given mixed messages of this kind are more likely to stay unsettled during a noise event, going in and out of hiding rather than settling down.

### **Why shouldn't I soothe my dog?**

Our natural response is to try to offer comfort and support when we see that our dog is afraid. This can make us seem worried and vulnerable, and confirms the dog's fear of what is happening. If we become the main source of security for the dog during times of stress, the dog may have greater difficulty coping when we aren't around.

It is much better that the dog learns to go somewhere safe to hide, rather than depending on people for comfort. We should act as good role models; remaining calm and relaxed as if nothing bad is happening, and helping to guide the dog to its hiding place. Above all, try to be consistent in the way that you manage and interact with your dog during loud noise events.

## **Client handout: Providing a hiding place for your noise-fearful dog**

When we were developing the questionnaire that you completed online, one of our findings was that dogs that were able to hide somewhere in the house showed significantly lower levels of distress during loud noise events.

All dogs that are afraid of loud noises need a place to hide from them, but if your dog got a score of 8 or above on the "coping behaviour" part of the questionnaire, it is particularly important that you set up a suitable hiding place. This is because higher scores on this part of the test indicate that a dog is having real difficulty dealing with loud noises, and is likely to get worse over time unless it is given a better opportunity to cope.

To prepare a suitable hiding place for your dog, identify somewhere in the house that is:

- Dark
- Quiet
- Away from disturbing activity

Typically dogs choose to hide in places like this, such as behind the sofa, under the bed or in cupboards. This gives us an indication of where dogs prefer to hide. If your dog already goes to a place like this, then you can use this as your dog's hiding place. Otherwise, identify somewhere in the house that fits with these requirements.

Try to set up the hiding place at least a week ahead of any loud noise events that you are expecting.

The hiding place can be made more secure in the following ways:

- Keep windows and curtains closed.
- Turn off lights.
- Provide a comfortable bed with extra blankets for your dog to dig into or hide underneath.
- Put a water bowl, some chews and toys in the room where the hiding place is located.
- Install an Adaptil diffuser in the room where the hiding place is located, close to where the dog's bed is located.

Make this hiding place available to your dog at *all* times of day and night, regardless of whether you are at home or not.

Your dog is more likely to use the hiding place if he/she likes to go there at other times.

Here are some ways to encourage your dog to like the new hiding place:

Take your dog to the hiding place each day to give him some food treats or a chew. If you find your dog is in the hiding place, offer him some treats and praise.