



Adams Vets™

**Remember
your pet this
November**

It is estimated that approximately 45 per cent of dogs become stressed and fearful while fireworks are going off, yet many owners are unaware of how to help their pets with firework fears and the precautions that can be taken to help them cope with their fear of loud noises.

What can dog owners do to help their pet? An important step is to ensure the dog has a safe haven or den to retreat to in the home; an area that they feel secure in. Ideally this should be in an internal room that is easily accessible and away from windows. The den can be a place that the dog already uses and adapted to be as comfortable, dark and quiet as possible, or a manmade temporary option such as a cardboard box or crate. Preparing a den in advance allows the dog to get used to the area and accept it as a safe place. Whatever format of den is chosen it is also advisable to use towels and/or blankets to cover the area to dim the sounds and lights of the fireworks and ensure the dog has access to the den at all times (even when the owner is not at home).

The dog appeasing pheromone Adaptil® has been shown to reduce anxiety and help dogs cope with challenging situations, including firework events. Adaptil is easy to use and it is available as a diffuser, collar and spray. It reduces the intensity of the dog's fear response and should be used alongside other measures to manage or treat sound sensitivities, such as building a den. Using an Adaptil diffuser or collar from October can help to combat any build up of anxiety the dog experiences in the run up to the fireworks event.

Long term support In the long term, desensitisation and counter conditioning have been shown to be safe and effective methods for treating sound sensitivities; the 'Sound Scary' CD (also available on iTunes) is a good home tool. However, the dog needs to be relaxed during this training, which means that it needs to be done after the party fireworks season has passed. Support throughout the process is recommended and a referral to a qualified behaviourist may be necessary.

Signs of anxiety in dogs are: trembling and shaking, licking of lips, panting, chewing objects, clinging to owners, cowering and hiding, unable to settle, trying to dig, barking excessively, urinating or defecating.

On the night top tips

1. Provide a den or hiding place for your pet
2. Use an ADAPTIL® as close to the den or hiding place as possible, or where your pet spends most of its time
3. Keep dogs inside during fireworks and check that their microchip is up to date
4. Ensure windows, doors remain closed during firework season to both prevent pets escaping and reduce the noise
5. Provide distractions, in the form of new toys and chews. Draw curtains and put the TV on to mask any noise
6. DO NOT punish your pet! This will only make your pet more distressed
7. Try not to leave your pets alone when fireworks are going off
8. Continue to use ADAPTIL® until the party or fireworks season ends

What about cats?

Cats are not thought to develop sound sensitivities as dogs do, however they will be frightened by the loud bangs and flashes of fireworks. Therefore, during the firework season, owners are advised to keep their cats indoors. This change in routine and confinement to the home can sometimes cause cats to become upset and show unwanted behaviours such as urine marking, inter-cat tension and vertical scratching.

Owners can help their cats cope with these changes by providing enough litter trays throughout the house and ensuring all of the cats in the household have safe places to hide in. These are often up high, for example on the top of cupboards, but could also be under a bed or in a box. Once a cat has found a safe spot for the night, leave it alone and do not try to coax it out, as this refuge is where it feels most secure. Plugging a Feliway® diffuser into the room where a cat spends most of its time or where its safe place is, at least 48 hours before the festivities begin, will help to ensure it feels as safe and secure as possible. There is also a Feliway spray which can be applied to a cat's bedding on the night of the event to provide additional support.

To see how stressed your cat is take the Cat Stress test: <https://www.feliway.com/uk/Cat-behaviour/Assess-your-cats-well-being>

What about other pets?

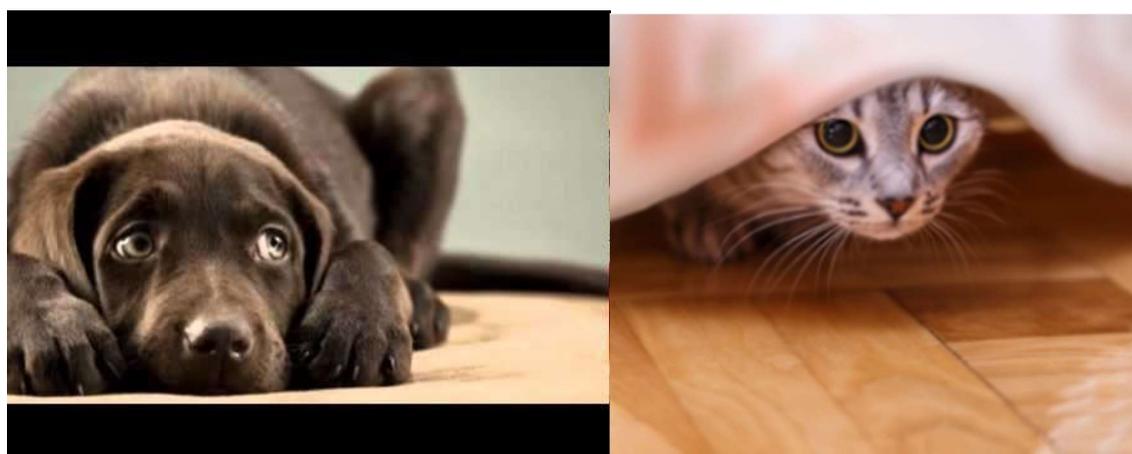
Small pets Small animals and birds all need to be treated with special care as these animals are easily frightened. Hutches, cages and enclosures should, if possible, be brought into a

quiet room indoors, or into a garage or shed. Providing extra bedding for them to burrow down in can help the pet feel more secure. Aviaries should be covered with thick blankets to block out the sight and sound of the fireworks, but care should be taken to ensure there is enough ventilation in the aviary.

On the night top tips

- 1.** Provide lots of places for your cat to hide, such as cupboards or wardrobes. Make these spaces comfortable with their blankets or beds.
- 2.** FELIWAY can be sprayed on these areas to make them more comforting for the cat.
- 3.** Make sure resources such as food, water, and litter boxes are available for your cat at all times whilst hidden in some part of the home.
- 4.** Plug in a FELIWAY Diffuser in the area your cat usually feels the most secure, at least 24 hours for noises that can be anticipated such as fireworks, and keep it plugged-in continuously until a week after the event.
- 5.** During the event allow the cat to hide.
- 6.** Do NOT try and coax your cat out as this may upset it more.

Fireworks can be difficult for many pets to cope with but there is a lot that can be done to support them through this troubling period. For further information please contact us.



October Special Offer



Cats like routine and a quiet environment. Unexpected noise will upset a cat.

Loud noise such as music played loudly, domestic appliance (vacuum cleaner, mixer, clippers, etc), parties at home, visitors or even fireworks can be frightening for cats.

When exposed to such noises, cats try to escape to the unpleasant sound source, mostly by running away or hiding. Other signs displayed by cats are shivering or vocalising.

Book a nurse fireworks clinic now. They are free of charge in October.



Unsure how fearful your dog with fireworks is?

Was your dog scared of fireworks last year? If so, now is a perfect time to get ready for firework season. Please download and fill in the sounds sensitive questionnaire by following the link

<https://www.adapttil.com/uk/What-Causes-Stress-in-Dogs/Behaviourist-Fear-of-Fireworks-Assessment>

After you have taken this test you will be provided with a full report on your dog's noise sensitivity.

If your dog's report is "mild" you can see a nurse for a **free nurse firework clinics**. If the result is "moderate" and "severe", you will probably require some medicine so your dog must

see a vet. As we already have a lot of the information needed from the questionnaire, you will get a **half price consult with the vet!**

The half price consultation will apply ONLY if you bring the questionnaire in.

☆☆The 2018 Veterinary Awards are now open! ☆☆

The Veterinary Awards are often referred to as the 'Oscars' of the veterinary profession. They celebrate the hard work and dedication of veterinary staff, recognising those who inspire their clients and colleagues with their commitment and passion.

We get so much positive feedback from our clients and we would be very grateful if you could tell your story by nominating us. If you think we have gone above and beyond for you and your pet, it's time to nominate us! Nominations are due to close on the 12th January 2018.

We would love to bring one of these awards to Liverpool this year, and you can help us. You can nominate in the following categories:

☆ Practice of the year

☆ Veterinary Surgeon of the year

☆ Veterinary Nurse of the year

☆ Practice Manager of the year

☆ Practice Support staff of the year

Follow the link below, to register your vote:

<https://www.petplan.co.uk/vetawards/>

As always, thank you to all of our clients and your pets - we wouldn't change our jobs for the world and we feel very lucky to have such amazing clients.



Ask the Vet

Katrina Taylor BVSc MRCVS

What is neutering?

Male pets are castrated whereby their testicles are removed. Female pets are spayed whereby their ovaries and uterus (womb) is removed.

Both operations are carried out by a vet under general anaesthesia and will prevent your pet from reproducing. They will be asleep during the operation. Although the operation carries some risk, as does all operations; it is much safer for a younger pet to undergo anaesthesia than an older pet, should they face health problems due to being unneutered. We ensure animals are not in pain by giving pain relief to keep them comfortable.

Myths and misconceptions

My female pet should have a litter before she is neutered? No. There is no reason for your female, dog, cat, and rabbit to have a litter before she is neutered. It doesn't benefit them emotionally to have a litter before she is spayed. In fact, spaying your animal before their first season has the most health benefits. Every time a dog has a season this increases her chance of developing mammary cancer (breast cancer) in later life. 90% of unneutered female rabbits develop cancer of the uterus by the age of 5.

If I neuter my pet, they will gain weight? No. over feeding and under exercising causes obesity.

If you are worried about your pet's weight, there are more effective things you can do instead of avoiding getting them neutered. Puppies require more calories than older dogs so make sure you are feeding for the correct life stage of your pet. Adult cats require a neutered adult cat diet. Rabbits require their diet to be comprised of 90% hay and 10% pellet food and fresh greens. At Adams Vets we provide weight clinics at both our branches. Please phone the practice for more information.

Should I get my pet neutered? Yes. We recommend you neuter your pet. Neutering has many health benefits such as preventing serious health issues in future such as certain types of cancers or pyometra – an infection of the womb which can be life threatening. This is also the case for indoor pets too.

Getting my pet neutered will change their behaviour or personality? No. Your pet's personality is dependent on genetics, upbringing and not their hormones. Neutering can have an impact on certain types of behaviours that are associated with hormones such as: • Urine marking in the house (spraying) • Male cats and dogs roaming from home • Stress and behavioural changes associated with coming into season • Certain types of aggressive behaviours.

Neutering your dog

The benefits for female dogs • Reduces her chance of developing breast cancer particularly if performed before her 1st season around 6 months. Some large breed dogs require them to be older before spaying. • Prevents her from developing a potential life-threatening infection of the womb called a pyometra • Females can have large litters, as many as 18 in some cases – that is a lot of mouths to feed! It is your responsibility to care for her during the pregnancy, birth and looking after the litter. There can be significant costs involved if she has difficulty giving birth and requires an operation.

The benefits for male dogs • Stops him from developing testicular cancer and prostate disease. • Can help reduce certain types of aggression. • He will be less likely to roam, therefore less likely to get hit by a car, go missing or get in a fight. • Reduces behaviour like marking and humping.

Neutering your cat, We recommend cats are neutered at 4 months old as it this point in their life whereby they can get pregnant even by a brother or father if unneutered.

The benefits for female cats • Reduces her chance of developing cancer of the uterus or ovaries. • Prevents her from developing a potential life-threatening infection of the womb called a pyometra. • Stop her coming into heat every 6 months – which causes behavioural changes and some stress.

The benefits for male cats • It makes him less likely to roam and therefore less likely to go missing or be hit by a car. Consequently, will less likely get into fights with other cats and pick up infections such as feline AIDS (FIV). This is spread through cat bites. • Less likely to urine mark (spray) in your house. • He won't smell as strongly as an unneutered male.

Neutering your rabbit Rabbits are social animals and it is important that they live in pairs. Neutered male and female rabbits live together happily as do neutered rabbits in same sex groups.

Other benefits include

The benefits for female rabbits: • Up to 90% of female rabbits develop uterine cancer by the age of 5. Neutering will stop her developing these cancers • Can prevent her from developing aggressive behaviours. • Can be neutered from 16 weeks old as long as she is at least 1 kg.

The benefits for male rabbits: • Unneutered male rabbits can be too aggressive to live with other rabbits, which can make them lonely. • It can reduce aggressive behaviours, spraying and other hormone linked behavioural problems. • He can be neutered when his testicles are present around 12 weeks old.

Thousands of unwanted dogs are put to sleep every year because there aren't enough homes for them. You can help by neutering your pet. Please phone the practice if you require any more information or wish to get your pet neutered.