

Different animals react differently to new people, places, things and situations. However, there are some popular stress factors for pets:

- + Unusual noises
- + Unknown places & odors
- + Unknown people
- + People exhibiting strange/unusual behavior
- + Visiting animals coming into their territory

- + Unpredictable or rough handling
- + Being crowded by people or other animals
- + Inadequate exercise or mental stimulation
- + Extreme indoor and outdoor temperatures



Hints for managing the stressed dog

Recognising stress



Yawning
Narrowing the eyes
Tucking the tail



Panting
Avoiding eye contact
Tense forehead and ears



Licking the lips or nose
Lowering or curving the body

These are a dog's way of asking to be left alone

Approaching the stressed dog



Try to avoid
Head on approach
Leaning over
Eye contact

Try to

- Allow the dog to settle before approaching
- Give the dog more time and space if you see signs of stress or fear.
- Use cues (e.g. sit, down) and rewards



Try to
Approach from the side
Crouch down
Reach under not over

Handling the stressed dog

Can the procedure be postponed?

Alternative options if examination isn't possible



Try to avoid
Noisy and busy areas
Use of force

Trial therapy for likely diagnosis or suspected pain
Prescribe short acting anxiolytics and re-schedule the appointment
Muzzle training to allow less stressful handling
Train the dog to be less fearful of examination and handling



Try to
Choose a quiet location
Use minimum restraint
Stay calm and relaxed



Hints for managing the stressed cat

Recognising stress



Attempting to hide or to avoid being handled



Swishing tail
Flattened ears
Lowered head



Arching the back
Bushing up the tail
Dilated pupils

Managing the stressed cat



Try to avoid
Noisy and busy areas
Use of force
Examination or treatment in sight of other animals

Can the procedure be postponed?
Alternative options if examination isn't possible
Trial therapies for likely diagnosis or suspected pain
Prescribe short acting anxiolytics and re-schedule the appointment
Teach the cat to be less fearful of examination and handling



Try to avoid
Dragging or tipping the cat from its carrier
Scruffing unless absolutely unavoidable



Try to
Stay calm and relaxed
Use minimum restraint
Wrap snugly in a towel



If the cat is hospitalised
Ask the owner to bring in recently used bedding
Provide somewhere to hide
Keep the area around the kennel quiet



Try to
Choose a quiet location
Allow cat to step from its carrier

Behavioral Considerations for Emergency Preparedness

Whenever presented with a new item, situation, or routine, it is important to pay close attention to your pet's body language and help ease him or her into the experience (see chart on reverse side). This is especially true during a disaster situation. Below are a few tips that can help set your pet up for success, whether in the event of an emergency or new experiences found in everyday life.

Ongoing Desensitization to New Experiences

- + See your environment through your pet's eyes - things that are commonplace to us may seem bigger, louder or more threatening to him/her.
- + Continually exposing your pet to different people, places and things will help make him/her more open to new situations.

Practice Obedience Training

- + Obedience work helps build confidence in your pet and strengthens the communication and understanding between the two of you.
- + Practicing commands such as COME or STAY can be crucial in keeping your pet safe in a potentially dangerous situation.

Have a Plan & Do Dress Rehearsals

- + Having a plan will make you feel more in control, and your pet will pick up on your confident energy.
- + Take advantage of storms and bad weather to practice not only getting your pet to the door, but also leashing or putting him/her in a carrier.
- + Identify a person who can get to your pet if you cannot, and have him/her handle and leash your pet often and during bad weather.
- + If your evacuation spot is accessible via train or car, go for a ride, so the first time your pet makes the trip isn't during an emergency situation.

Offer Plenty of Mental & Physical Exercise

- + Mental stimulation through obedience work and interactive toys is a great way for your pet to expend excess energy.
- + In case of evacuation, research places to stop while traveling to allow your pet to exercise, helping keep stress levels under control.

Physical Changes

- + Your pet may experience a nervous stomach if feeling stressed or anxious – have something on hand that helps firm your pet's stool.
- + If you can help it, avoid trying anything brand new that may cause added stress on his /her system (new food, treat, bully stick, etc)
- + Include in your pet's carrier and inform your back up person of allergies, medications or any other critical information to your pet's well-being.



**Emergency Preparedness
For Pets Workshop**

