

Noise Phobia (Thunderstorms and Fireworks)



How do I know if my pet has storm/noise phobia?

Loud noises such as thunderstorms and fireworks can cause anxiety for some of our pets and it is not uncommon to see. Signs of anxiety that you may notice in your pet during a thunderstorm are:

- Hiding
- Pacing
- Vocalizing (barking, howling, whining)
- Trembling
- Panting
- Drooling
- Destructive behavior

What can I do to make my pet more comfortable?

- **Create a Safe Place:** Creating a safe place for your pets during a storm can be a helpful approach to storm anxiety. A dark (without windows or cover the windows), quiet room can make the pet feel more comfortable. If you are able to be in the same room with your pet, that can be beneficial as well. Allow the pet to come and go as they please so they don't feel trapped in that location. Stock this area with their favorite blankets and toys.
- **Distraction/Training:** Redirecting your pet during the storm can allow them to focus on other things and decrease their anxiety. Teaching them tricks or commands to follow during these times and offering high reward treats may keep their attention on the distraction, rather than the storm.
- **Thundershirts or Storm Attire:** There is evidence that certain attire can help with storm anxiety as it provides the comforting feeling of being swaddled. There are many products out there aimed at both providing the swaddling sensation as well as some to decrease static buildup.
 - Thundershirt: Used to create calming pressure. Can be purchased online or at most pet stores.
 - Storm Defender Cape: Used to reduce static buildup that may be causing anxiety in a pet. Some people believe the static buildup causes anxiety as well.
- **Calming Pheromones:** Calming pheromones, such as Adaptil (DAP), can help calm our pets when they are stressed. Both collars and diffusers are available. The diffusers simply plug into the wall and last approximately 30 days. It is recommended to put these in rooms where your pet spends the majority of their time.
- **Medication:** There are medications available that may help reduce anxiety as well. These medications can be used as needed or daily. For thunderstorm anxiety, we typically only need to use the medication as needed. These medications work best when given before the anxiety begins. If the forecast shows a storm coming, it is beneficial to give the medication 30-60 minutes prior. If you are interested in trying these medications, we can certainly discuss those available. We are required to have seen your pet recently and make sure they are healthy to be able to prescribe medications.