

Noise and Storm Phobia Checklist

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There is no explanation as to why some dogs and cats suffer with an intense fear of noises such as thunderstorms, fireworks, or gunshots. Even heavy rains or a speeding emergency vehicle, with its deafening siren, can cause a strong negative reaction. These are typical triggers for the panic response. But there are also less evident causes for storm phobias, such as pre-storm barometric pressure

changes, electrostatic disturbances, and the characteristic smells associated with storms. At times, even the sight of a gun will terrify a dog.

Basset Hounds, Beagles, Collies, and German Shepherds are especially likely to show signs of noise phobia. But it can affect any pet, with the range of severity differing between animals. The situation becomes serious when the resulting behavior is injurious to the pet or to property. Panic-stricken animals can squeeze into small places or escape from homes and fenced yards. Since an animal's level of fear can be alleviated and managed, your veterinarian is able to suggest ways of dealing with it to help your pet feel secure as the fury of a storm passes over or as celebrators on the Fourth of July subject him to "bursting cannons in the sky."

Use this list of symptomatic behaviors to determine the probability of noise phobia. Remember, these signs must occur when the noise or storm is present.

Symptom Checklist

1. Defecating and urinating in inappropriate places
2. Chewing and/or panting
3. Nervous pacing
4. Trembling and shaking
5. Drooling
6. Attempts at escape
7. Clinging behavior

8. Expressing the anal glands
9. Loss of appetite
10. Ignoring commands
11. Dilated pupils
12. Barking or meowing for no apparent reason

Dogs and cats do not outgrow their tendency toward noise phobia, so if you observe these behaviors in your pet, print the checklist and take it to your veterinarian. He will make an assessment and propose a treatment plan. In most cases, managing the condition involves behavior modification techniques, controlling and adjusting the environment, using [training aids](#) and, possibly, administering [prescribed medications](#).

If your veterinarian prescribes a medication, you may want to print out our [Prescription Authorization Form](#) and bookmark the information on [how to order a prescription](#) at [Drs. Foster and Smith's Licensed Pharmacy](#), where you can find savings on all your faithful friends' prescription needs.

Be sure to inform your veterinarian if your dog is taking other medications or supplements. These may interact in potentially harmful ways; your veterinarian can make the best recommendation for your dog.