



Practical help for stressed or nervous dogs



What's inside this guide?

✓ Introduction - Feeling better together	3
✓ What causes fear and what's happening when dogs are scared?	4
✓ What are dogs afraid of?	6
✓ How to spot signs of fear or anxiety – Lintbells guide to dog body language	8
✓ 4 steps to help fearful dogs	10
✓ Using supplements in a multimodal approach	12
✓ Which natural ingredients help stressed or anxious dogs?	13
✓ About YuCALM Dog	14
✓ Contact us	16



Miss that happily wagging tail?

Help to progress from fearful dog to confident canine

Our dogs give us so much! From pure joy when we first greet in the morning, to excitement at teatime and infectious enthusiasm when we return home. Shared adventures on walks and fun play times, and quiet companionship when we need someone who's always there. When our dogs struggle with their own fears or anxiety, it can be upsetting, stressful and confusing to know what's best to do...

Whether it's meeting strangers, spending time alone, travelling, fireworks or making new canine friends, many dogs find certain circumstances hard to handle. In fact, a recent report* by the PDSA indicates that around 80% of dogs get stressed or anxious from time to time. So if your dog sometimes finds life challenging, don't feel alone – or to blame.

95%
OF PET OWNERS
BELIEVE OWNING
A PET PROVIDES
INVALUABLE
COMPANIONSHIP*

87% OF PET
OWNERS BELIEVE
THE UK IS A
NATION OF
ANIMAL
LOVERS*

FEELING BETTER TOGETHER

Most dogs who find certain things scary can be helped to feel better. This often takes a combination of things (see the 'multimodal approach' p12), including a check up at the vets, help from an animal behaviour expert, and perhaps a supplement to calm and increase happiness.

We cover all this – and more – in this guide. So read on, and start your journey towards happier days with your best friend.



Understanding fear

WHY DO DOGS FEEL FEARFUL?

Your dog might become anxious or fearful of specific triggers for a number of reasons, many of which are beyond your control. This can include their genetic make-up, early life experiences, as well as scary encounters with things in later life.

Fearful dogs try different behaviours in response to what's scaring them – and change their behaviour depending on the consequences of what works and what doesn't. Sometimes, your dog's coping strategies result in behaviours that are problematic for their well-being – and distressing and difficult for you.

“Thor is a lot calmer, plays more and is more attentive. He is a totally different dog.”

McCallum and Thor



WHAT'S HAPPENING, SCIENTIFICALLY SPEAKING?

Dr Emily Blackwell, Clinical Animal Behaviourist at the University of Bristol has helped us create a diagram to explain how fears – and the behaviours that show us that dogs are frightened – develop.

FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH SOMETHING SCARY

Stress response is triggered

When your dog encounters something scary, they become 'aroused' or 'hyper-vigilant' and they think about what to do next.

1



Your dog tries to resolve the conflict

Your dog will try different responses to solve the issue – that might be running away, hiding or growling to make the scary thing go away. The response he or she tries will depend on their personality and past experiences.

Consequences?

If your dog's behaviour successfully removes the threat (your scared dog moves away from the threat, or the threat itself moves away or ceases), 'arousal' will decline, helping them feel better.

If the behaviour is unsuccessful, and the threat is not removed, your dog becomes more 'aroused'. They may try another response to the threat – if they started with a warning growl and the threat doesn't go away, they may snap.

NEXT ENCOUNTER WITH SOMETHING SCARY

If their response worked last time, they may try it again.

2

However, if this behaviour doesn't successfully remove the threat again, they may try something else. Perhaps instead of barking, your dog will growl.

Consequences?

With repeated exposure to scary events, a successful behaviour (e.g. growling, hiding, barking or snapping) becomes more established (automatic).



AFTER MANY ENCOUNTERS

3, 4, 5...



Over time, with repeated exposure to a scary situation, successful responses will become more established (hiding, growling or whatever has worked in the past). There are two ways this can manifest:

1: Sensitisation – responses occur even with less intense triggers. So if your dog has shown fearful responses towards other dogs coming close, they may start to react to dogs that used to be at a 'safe' distance.

2: Generalisation – they respond in a wider range of situations. For example, a dog who is scared of sudden, unpredictable loud noises – such as fireworks, thunder or heavy vehicles – may develop a reaction to other similar noises.

What's worrying the UK dog population?

OTHER DOGS

At home, or out and about.



47%

react to other dogs out on walks.¹

15%

show aggression towards familiar dogs in the same household.¹

PEOPLE

The postman, strangers, people passing by or visiting your home, or old friends who look or behave differently, or have a distinctive feature (think hats, beards, high vis jackets and glasses), or people running, cycling, skateboarding etc.



80%

show an undesirable response to strangers.¹

VISITS TO THE VETS, GROOMERS OR KENNELS

Negative past experiences can often be the root cause of anxiety in dogs.



17%

are scared of vets.²

TRAVELLING AND HOLIDAYS

Our dogs join us on more adventures than ever before, which can be daunting, and filled with new experiences. Some dogs also struggle with the travel itself – cars, trains, boats, planes, buses and more – can be overwhelming for a dog.



23%

of dogs are anxious or fearful of car travel.³

¹ Blackwell, E. J., Twells, C., Seawright, A. & Casey, R. A. (2008). The relationship between training methods and the occurrence of behaviour problems, as reported by owners, in a population of domestic dogs. *Journal of Veterinary Behaviour*, 3, 207-217.

² PDSA Animal Wellbeing (PAW) Report 2018, pg. 18 - <https://www.pdsa.org.uk/media/4372/paw-2018-full-web-ready-a4-printable.pdf>

³ Mills, D. S. & Mills, C. B. (2003). A survey of the behaviour of UK household dogs. *Proceedings of the 4th International Veterinary Behaviour Meeting*, Proceedings Number 352, August 18-20, 2003. Eds K Seksel, G. Perry, D. Mills, D. Frank, E. Lindell, P. McGreevy, P. Pageat. Sydney, University of Sydney Post-Graduate Foundation in Veterinary Science, pp 93-98.

LOUD NOISES

This can include things like fireworks, gunshots, sirens, bird scarers, vacuums, even music.



45%

are scared of fireworks and other loud noises.⁴

NEW MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY

Unfortunately, our best friends don't always feel comfortable with new arrivals, that's both new pets and new little people.



13%

respond negatively to family members.¹

BEING LEFT ALONE

This is known as separation related behaviour (SRB), or 'separation anxiety.'



30%

Show obvious signs of anxiousness when home alone.¹

80%

Could be suffering in silence.⁶

NEW SITUATIONS OR OBJECTS

This can include the terrifying cones that have invaded the street, next door's evil washing line, or a new sign outside a shop, or simply encountering situations or places they haven't experienced before.



Puppies and dogs who don't receive appropriate '**habituation**' to different situations and objects, can develop what behaviourists call "**neophobia**".⁵

Get the full picture and learn to spot the signs of fear and anxiety online at lintbells.com



⁴ Blackwell, E.J., Bradshaw, J. W. D. & Casey, R. A. (2013). Fear responses to noises in domestic dogs: Prevalence, risk factors and co-occurrence with other fear related behaviour. Applied Animal Behaviour Science, 145, 15-25.

⁵ Pluijmakers, J, T. M., Appleby, D. L. & Bradshaw, J. W. S. (2010). Exposure to video images between 3 and 5 weeks of age decreased Neophobia in domestic dogs. Applied Animal Behaviour Science, 126, 51-58.

⁶ <https://behaviourvet.wordpress.com/2013/10/14/left-home-alone-a-welfare-issue-for-dogs/>

What's your dog trying to tell you?

Our dogs are communicating with us all the time – but we don't always understand what they're saying. Here are some of the signs to help you spot when your dog might be feeling stressed or anxious.

Licking their lips



Ears back



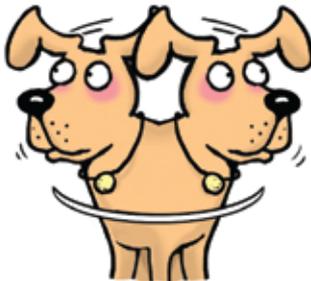
Yawning



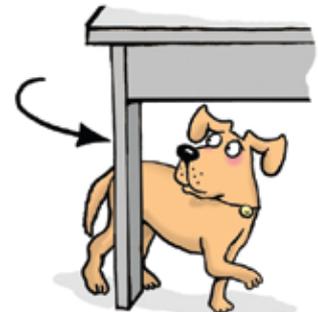
Panting



Highly alert or restless



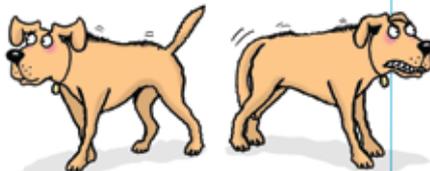
Hiding



Shaking or cowering



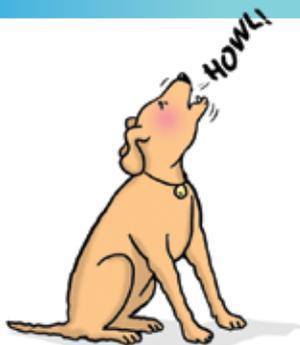
Raised hackles, bearing teeth or growling



Snapping or biting



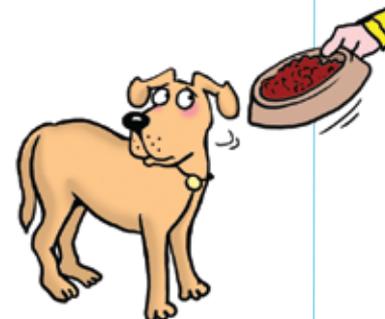
Barking or howling



Destructive or accidents



Loss of appetite



4 steps to help fearful dogs

1 IDENTIFY THE SOURCE OF YOUR DOG'S FEAR

Knowing your dog's signs of fear and identifying their triggers can really help. As you learn to understand your dog's body language, recognising the specific situation that cause them fear or anxiety will put you in the position to be able to do something about it. To help you understand what your dog's trying to tell you, see pages 8-9.



2 SHORT-TERM MANAGEMENT

Try to avoid any triggers of fear or anxiety to reduce stress. This will make it possible to implement a behavioural therapy programme as your dog is less worried and more receptive. Exposure to what your dog finds scary can ruin the chances of helping them at their own pace.

It can be upsetting and frustrating when your dog displays difficult coping responses like destructive behaviour, barking, lunging, inappropriate toileting and growling, but it's very important that they are not punished. This can make them even more stressed and deepen their fears, and cause even more extreme behavioural reactions.



3 GET PROFESSIONAL HELP

Once you've recognised that there is something worrying your dog, it's important to talk to your vet. They'll be able to check that everything's OK medically. If the issue isn't medical, it's time to talk to a Clinical Animal Behaviourist to devise a practical plan to help your dog. These experts provide advice and behavioural therapy programmes for pets and their owners. As well as helping you understand your dog, they'll give lots of advice to help you manage and improve the situation together. Out-of-date advice and techniques can do more harm than good, so it's important to seek professional help, and choose your experts carefully.



4

CONSIDER A CALMING SUPPLEMENT

A calming supplement can help you and your dog on your journey towards making every day a good day. As well as providing effective calming and a happiness boost in stressful situations, all-natural options like **YuCALM Dog** can be used everyday to support your behavioural therapy programme – see how on the next page.



Supplements within your support strategy – the ‘multimodal approach’

Supplements can help stressed, anxious dogs by providing calming support in challenging situations. They’re also ideal as you work on changing feelings and responses to triggers of fear and anxiety.

The idea is to help your dog feel calmer, so they become more receptive to behavioural therapy techniques, which in time lead to a happier, more playful, more confident dog, and an improved quality of life for you both.

STAGE 1 SHORT TERM MANAGEMENT

Supplements can help your dog feel calmer, overall. It can be an ideal first step towards rehabilitation as you get advice from your vet practice or a certified behaviourist to make immediate environmental changes to help reduce stress.

STAGE 2 SUPPORT THEM TO FEEL BETTER

Working with a behaviourist, you’ll start behaviour therapy techniques, like desensitisation and counter conditioning. The right supplement can help your dog be more receptive to this therapy work thanks to its instant calming action.

Supplements also support learning by affecting the dopamine and serotonin pathways. Your dog feels happier and more playful as they learn new behavioural responses and experience more positive emotions, which can increase confidence and improves results.

STAGE 3 ONGOING IMPROVEMENT

With positivity, commitment, and consistency, you’ll start to see a real improvement as your dog becomes reassured, and feels better in situations that have caused fear or anxiety.

As your relationship moves forward together – your dog will be able to enjoy more out of life, as calmer emotional and behavioural responses are positively reinforced.

Which natural ingredients help stressed or anxious dogs?

There are many options to consider when it comes to natural supplements – so what do they typically include, and how do they help?



LEMON BALM



This herb is a member of the mint family. It's scientifically proven to work on 'GABA levels', which is responsible for reducing excitability. It can be considered as the 'downer' that works alongside glutamate, the 'upper'.

Lemon Balm is included in our **YuCALM Dog** supplement to make your best friend feel more relaxed, soothing stress and encouraging calm behaviour.

L-THEANINE



This amino acid is uniquely found in green tea. It offers natural calming properties by supporting your dog's production of the calming compound serotonin, and the neurotransmitter GABA. It also supports the production of dopamine, which maintains levels of hormones responsible for happiness.

L-Theanine is included in our **YuCALM Dog** supplement to boost relaxation and attention, which helps to promote happiness and playfulness in your dog so that you can enjoy more of your life together.

FISH PROTEIN HYDROLYSATE



This natural fish protein that helps to ease anxiety. It works by supporting your dog's brain and helping calming signals find the right spot. It also supports GABA and dopamine levels for a "feel good" effect.

B VITAMINS



Look out for B vitamins, which support healthy nerves and brain function. We include them in **YuCALM Dog** to reduce excitability and improve concentration.

Introducing YuCALM Dog

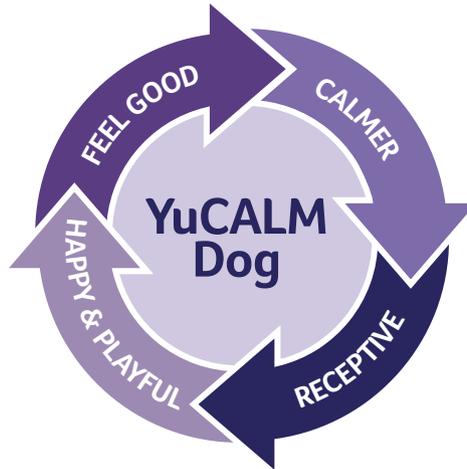
YuCALM Dog is a premium, natural supplement to support stressed or anxious dogs. The clever combination of scientifically proven ingredients make a tail-wagging difference, by supporting natural calming pathways in the brain. YuCALM Dog is an effective way to help reduce stress and support dogs to become happier and more playful.



A complete formula to support a calm and happy dog

YuCALM Dog triple-action cycle

It's the only **'triple-action'** natural calming supplement for dogs, with an innovative formula that gets to work in three ways, unlocking clever chemicals called neurotransmitters that affect how your dog's brain works. GABA reduces excitation (soothes and relaxes), while dopamine (the happiness chemical) and serotonin (the calming chemical) help your dog feel better, naturally.



YuCALM Dog, in a nutshell

- ✓ A complete formula to support a calm and happy dog – that's suitable to use long-term
- ✓ A unique formula with scientifically proven ingredients
- ✓ Safe and all-natural – it calms without sedating your dog
- ✓ It can be used as part of a longer-term behaviour therapy programme to help you and your dog enjoy more out of life, together

CHOOSING THE RIGHT EXPERT

It's a good idea to talk to your vet about ways to help your fearful dog. We also recommend using the register of Certified Clinical Animal Behaviourists (CCAB) to make sure you see someone with the right skills, knowledge and experience – inappropriate or out-of-date advice can do more harm than good to your dog's behaviour and welfare. To find your local Clinical Animal Behaviourist visit: <http://www.asab.org/ccab-register>



Contact us

FREE ONLINE REFERENCES

There's a range of support materials available online at www.lintbells.com to help you understand and support your dog when they show signs of stress or anxiety.

HOW TO CONTACT US

 Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm,
on **01462 790886**

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