

## Does "Fido" Have a Fear of Fireworks?

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The Fourth of July is a time of celebrating the Independence Day of America with fireworks representing the defeat of the British with “the rocket’s red glare and bombs bursting in air.” For the pet owner who has an animal that is frightened by the booms and blasts though, the circumstances can be defeating to them.

A few tips may be helpful in reducing your dog’s anxiety related to fireworks. First, create a comfortable place for your dog to lie down in an interior room of the house away from the windows. Preferably, use his or her crate as a den. Cover it with a thick blanket or comforter to help muffle out the sound of the booms. Second, create a distraction from the firework noise by playing the radio or a sound machine in the vicinity of where your dog will be.

Finally, there are holistic options and prescription medications that can work to reduce anxiety in your dog. One option is DAP (dog appeasing pheromone) which mimics the soothing scent of a mother dog. This is available as a plug-in diffuser or a collar at major pet stores or through

Trusty Vet's online pharmacy. An alternative is Anxitane which is a newly available oral supplement purchased from your veterinarian that has a derivative of green tea in it to produce a feeling of calm and relaxation. The "Thunder Shirt" has shown to reduce anxiety associated with thunderstorms and would have the similar effect of a hug from a concerned pet owner in the case of firework induced fear. Prescription sedatives are the last resort to managing fear behavior in pets but are available on a case by case basis after evaluation of your pet's general health. The best method of controlling your dog's fear of fireworks may be to stay home so that you can offer them security with your loving presence.

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