

# Newsletter

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## Happy Fourth of July from Morris Hospital!

April showers bring May flowers, but late June brings storms, thunder, and fireworks. What are some of the symptoms of summer: suntans, barbecues, the dog hiding under the bed...What? Oh yeah, we may like summer but Deogee faces some terrifying experiences a head. There are many things that we can do to help ease Buster's fears.

One of the most effective is medication. There are many choices of mild anti-anxiety medications that can dramatically remove the suffering that comes with terror. We are carrying an all-natural supplement called Composure that is fantastic to help dial down feelings of fear and help a dog cope with storm phobias. Call us today and so that we can help you select the correct product for



your pet!

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Fear Periods in Dogs
- 2 Doggie Sunburns
- 2 Puppy Socialization
- 4 Water Safety and Pets

## Fear Periods in Dogs

Chris

Have you ever hear about the "Fear Periods" in dog training? Have you ever wondered what it means and how it applies to your dog?

The fear periods are times in the juvenile canine's developmental process where interactions have a deep impact. Sometimes experiences during these times can lead to phobias down the road.

Fear periods are usually (general guideline for each puppy) range from 8-10 weeks; 16-20 weeks; 6 months; 10 months; 14-18 months. Not every single puppy will go through a fear period during one or more of these times, but I think it's important to at least be aware of these typical time frames and be on the lookout for any changes in your pup's behavior. Fear periods - how to recognize them: if the pup is all of a sudden afraid of something they were fine with before - be it a situation, person, object. "Afraid" can be retreating mode - backing away, running away, cowering - that kind of behavior. Or it can be seen with more "go away" behaviors - growling, showing teeth, etc. Or, it can be a mixture of both - cowering and showing teeth or any mixture of conflicting signals.

So what does all of this mean to you? Well, it means during these times when you see these reactions in your puppy to be extra patient, extra slow, and extra kind. It does NOT mean that you keep your puppy in the house and "protect" it from all of the things that are scaring it. During these times it is recommended that you consult a dog trainer for tips to successfully help your puppy through these learning periods. Remember, just because we are scared does not mean that stop going out into the world!

## **Dogs Get Sunburns Too**

Humans and dogs alike can suffer from sunburn; long term exposure can result in skin damage and skin cancers. Like humans certain factors make some dogs more prone:

- dogs with white or light colored coats**
- dogs with a very short coat or no coat at all**
- dogs that have suffered coat loss from allergies or other medical conditions**
- and of course dogs that are outside during the hottest part of the day.**

What steps can you take to prevent your dog from getting sunburn?

- 1) Keep your dog inside in a cool room, or if they are outside, in a well shaded area or adequate shelter during the hottest parts of the days.
- 2) Use sunscreen on the parts of his body susceptible to sunburn. These parts include: nose, ends of the ears, around the mouth, eyelids and the underside of your dog- belly, groin and inside the legs; these areas are particularly at risk. Make sure you use a pet sunscreen because products for human use can contain ingredients that are toxic to your dog. Remember to regularly reapply the sunscreen. Pay particular attention to areas where little coat is covering and where the skin pigmentation is low or light in color. A great one is available at [www.epi-pet.com/sunprotectorsunscreenspray.aspx](http://www.epi-pet.com/sunprotectorsunscreenspray.aspx) or 866-204-0002.

Summer is just around the corner, so make sure that you and your dog stay happy and healthy during summer months. If you do happen to see any signs of sunburn such as red skin, fur loss and/or sores, please contact your local veterinarian and make sure you seek medical advice.

## **Puppy Socialization**

Angie

Puppy socialization is one of the most important things you can do for your new canine. All puppies are usually jovial and good natured. They love everyone and greet strangers with no fear. Because, of this, most owners feel their pup is confident and will stay that way, and certainly do not perceive a problem. Some common phrases we hear when a proud puppy owner comes in our Vet practice that inwardly make us cringe: "Why waste the \$\$\$ on class when the pup is happy and friendly" or "I know how to train a dog already, class is unneeded"

These are usually the same owners that feel frustrated when their dog at the age of 1 year has to be muzzled for an examination, or they have to drag in the front door while the dog is shaking uncontrollably and urinates and defecates inside the waiting room. Or in more severe cases has bitten a member of the family, a neighbor, or even just come close. It is very heartbreaking to see an animal euthanized or surrendered to rescue when it would have easily been prevented.

Did you know the NUMBER #1 reason a dog is surrendered to rescue is "behavior issues?" Listed below are A few simple steps you can take to ensure your puppy will remain happy and well socialized for years to come:

1. Go TO PUPPY CLASS! Compared to what you will spend on your dog in its lifetime this is a small expense. Sure most people can teach "sit" or "down" to their dog. BUT can it do these same things in a class with 10 other barking dogs after you have asked ONCE, not repeated it 20 times with your voice getting louder and louder.... I have personally worked at a dog training facility for 3 years and trained numerous dogs for competition obedience titles, yet I still take every new puppy to class. It really is worth the money.

2. Have your puppy go to 3 new places and meet 3 new people every week. This is pretty easy to do, visit your neighbors, visit your vets, local parks, relatives, the outdoor sections of KMART, WALMART, HOME DEPOT. Even just take a walk and keep treats in your pocket. Every new person you meet on your walk ask them if they would mind giving your pup a friendly pat on the head and a treat. The purpose of this is to establish the fact that strangers are a pleasant experience.

3. Consider dog daycare. What is better for dog-dog socialization than a controlled environment where he meets friendly dogs. The bonus of this is your pup will come home tired and a tired puppy is a well behaved puppy.

The Following is the Veterinary Medical Association's Official Statement on Puppy Socialization.

The primary and most important time for puppy socialization is the first three months of life.<sup>1, 2</sup> During this time puppies should be exposed to as many new people, animals, stimuli and environments as can be achieved safely and without causing overstimulation manifested as excessive fear, withdrawal or avoidance behavior.

For this reason, the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior believes that it should be the standard of care for puppies to receive such socialization before they are fully vaccinated.

Because the first three months are the period when sociability outweighs fear, this is the primary window of opportunity for puppies to adapt to new people, animals, and experiences. Incomplete or improper socialization during this important time can increase the risk of behavioral problems later in life including fear, avoidance, and/or aggression. Behavioral problems are the greatest threat to the owner-dog bond. In fact, behavioral problems are the number one cause of relinquishment to shelters.<sup>3</sup> Behavioral issues, not infectious diseases, are the number one cause of death for dogs under three years of age. While puppies' immune systems are still developing during these early months, the combination of maternal immunity, primary vaccination, and appropriate care makes the risk of infection relatively small compared to the chance of death from a behavior problem.

Veterinarians specializing in behavior recommend that owners take advantage of every safe opportunity to expose young puppies to the great variety of stimuli that they will experience in their lives. Enrolling in puppy classes prior to three months of age can be an excellent means of improving training, strengthening the human-animal bond, and socializing puppies in an environment where risk of illness can be minimized. For this reason, the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior believes that it should be the standard of care for puppies to receive such socialization before they are fully vaccinated. American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior [www.AVSAOnline.org](http://www.AVSAOnline.org)

In general, puppies can start puppy socialization classes as early as 7-8 weeks of age. Puppies should receive a minimum of one set of vaccines at least 7 days prior to the first class and a first deworming. They should be kept up-to-date on vaccines throughout the class

## Common Poison Emergencies

Ocular (Eyes): flush with copious amounts of water then seek medical attention

Dermal (Skin): bath with mild dish washing liquid and rinse with warm water to dissolve and strip.

Ingested (Eaten): contact poison control immediately! Some substances are neutralized with milk to prevent tissue corrosion, while others may require induce vomiting.

Rodenticides: prevent the animal from clotting it's blood

Zinc Phosphide: active ingredient in mole baits cause severe respiratory distress and death within 15 min to 4 hours.

Acetaminophen/Ibuprofen: toxicity can result from a single dose

Aspirin: Good vets DO NOT recommend giving for arthritis any longer because aspirin can cause ulcers in a dog easily.

Weight Loss Drugs: can increase blood pressure, cause seizures and tremors.

Moldy Food: can cause seizures and muscle incoordination, then death.

Rising Bread Dough: can cause bloat, vomiting, lethargy, death

**FYI:** Remember that summer means lot of creepy crawly little pests. Did you know that K9 Advantix is a great topical medication that not only prevents fleas, but also repels mosquitoes and biting flies? This is so perfect to protect tasty little ear tips and help with heartworm prevention!

Our pets feel the summer heat as much as we do. Full, glamorous, thick coats DO NOT protect them against the heat, but make them hot and miserable. Shaving them makes them cooler, more comfortable, plus is more sanitary. Flies are attracted to open wounds, poop caught in fur, and ear infections and can lay maggots which will eat your pet from the inside out.

## DOG WATER SAFETY TIPS

By Michelle

Going to the beach, river, lake or just staying at home by the pool is a great way to spend time in the summer, for both you and your dog. Most dogs love to retrieve balls from the water and many of them even enjoy swimming. Unfortunately, accidents happen. Here are some tips to keep in mind when your dogs are in or around the water.

- 1. Get a life vest:** It may sound silly, but it is a great idea to get a life vest for your dog. It makes a big difference when they are trying to swim and it is a great safety device, especially for those dogs that don't want to stay in the boat or canoe. Dogs can quickly get into trouble and if you are not there to help, may easily drown. By using a dog life vest when your dog's around water you are buying him extra time should he get into trouble and need rescuing. There are many different styles of life vest. You want to get one that fits the dog well, is made from breathable material (such as neoprene), has a nice sturdy handle and does not have loose pockets, straps or other dangling objects that can get hooked on something in the water.

Here are a few of my recommended life vests; ***Deluxe Pet Flotation Device (from Cabela's), Portage Float Coat (by Ruff Wear), Outward Hound Designer Pet Saver Lifejacket.***

### **2. Pay attention to your surroundings:**

Look out for potential hazards in advance and supervise your dog at all times. Watch for strong undercurrents, sticks and other objects your dog can get caught on, sharp rocks and shells under the water that could cut your dog's feet, muddy riverbanks that may make it difficult for your pet to get out of the water, extremely cold water can cause hypothermia and always make sure swimming pools and hot tubs are covered or fenced when you are not around.

- 3. Watch what your dog drinks:** Keep adequate fresh drinking water around for your dog. Discourage your dog from drinking from where he is swimming or playing. Pools have chlorine, lakes and rivers have bacteria, algae and parasites that can make your dog sick.
- 4. Rinse and dry your pet:** After your pet id finished playing in the water, rinse his coat thoroughly to remove any salt, chemicals or debris. Also make sure dogs ears are dry. You can wipe his ears out with a cotton ball or Kleenex. Dogs that spend a lot of time in the water are at higher risk of developing ear infections. Bacteria and yeast are big fans of the damp conditions inside the ear, especially when wet.
- 5. Have fun with your pet:** Just like you, your dog wants to play. Bring toys that are water proof and have fun playing with your dog. Here are some of my dog's most favorite water toys; ***Chuck it Flying Squirrel, the Water Wubba Floating Dog Toy (made by Kong), Chuck it Amphibious Dog Toys and Ruff Wear Hydro Plane.***



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