

 THIS JUST IN

## Awards from the Dog Writers Association of America

**Cornell DogWatch *had a strong showing***

**E**

very year, the Dog Writers Association of America holds a writing contest to highlight the best

articles of the year in a broad number of publications.

We are delighted that the August

# Help for Noise-Sensitive Dogs

### *Masking sounds can help disguise scary sounds*

**M**

any dogs respond dramatically to loud or sudden noises, and some are extremely fearful of



*Michael Edwards | iStock*

these sounds. If your dog suffers from noise sensitivity, you can implement some simple strategies as part of your management plan.

The simplest thing that you can do yourself to help your dog stay calm is to mask the scary noises. Pamela J. Perry, DVM, PhD, behavior resident at Cornell University’s College of Veterinary Medicine, recommends:

2023 article “Zinc-Responsive Dermatosis” by Eileen Fatcheric, DVM, earned first place in “Health Care, Magazine Articles.” In addition, we earned finalist awards for:

**Expert information from the Cornell Richard P. Riney Canine Health Center**

May 2024 – Vol. 28, No. 5

* The Cornell DogWatch newsletter
* “Could Your Dog Have ADHD?” By Deb M. Eldredge DVM (March 2023)
* “Don’t Wait: Surgery for BOAS” by Eileen Fatcheric DVM (May 2023)
* “Internal Injury From Trauma” by Deb M. Eldredge DVM (August 2023)
* “Old Dogs and Vaccinations” by Eileen Fatcheric DVM (July 2023)
* “The Benefits of DNA Testing” by Deb M Eldredge DVM (December 2022)
* “The Rise of Fungal Pneumonia” by Eileen Fatcheric DVM (August 2023)

While our goal is to present useful information to you, our readers, we are delighted for the recognition from DWAA.■

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* Play classical music
* Leave the television on
* Use a white noise machine

All these options provide a base layer of sound so that any loud or sudden noises are less obvious to your dog.

You can also dampen your dog’s hearing directly. “Mutt Muffs are commercially available hearing protection designed for dogs that reduce loud sounds,” says Dr. Perry. Closing your dog in a quiet room away from

the hubbub or covering his crate with a

*A dog who is afraid of loud noises will often hide from the noise, but you can help him through it.*

blanket can also help in some scenarios.

Whichever method or methods you choose to try with your dog, it is best to have them in place before your dog becomes upset. Plan ahead. If

construction on your street starts around 8 a.m., turn the television on at 7:30. If

it is Fourth of July weekend, play music all day and all night, and put your dog’s Mutt Muffs on right before a fireworks display is scheduled to start.

###### Music Selections

**What You Can Do**

**Mask the noise** with classical music, white noise, or even the TV or radio.

**Dampen your dog’s hearing** using a product like Mutt Muffs.

**Ask your dog to perform tricks** you’ve previously taught him, like sit, down, twirl, shake, and so on. Reward him for the effort.

**Distract your dog** with play or the most yummy treats you have.

**Take the dog out, if the noise is expected.** Take the dog out for a long walk or to a friend’s house to avoid anticipated noise, like construction.

**Consider medication** for extreme cases.

“Studies have found that music, especially classical, can be calming for dogs,” says Dr. Perry. There are even CDs and playlists designed specifically for canine ears.

“I honestly don’t have much experience with music specifically designed for dogs, although there is a study by Snowdon that supports ‘species- appropriate’ music use for cats,” says

Dr. Perry. “That said, there is a lot of individual preference, so some dogs may enjoy music specifically designed for their species.”

A sample of made-for-dogs music is a great place to start to see if your dog enjoys it and is calmer. But you can also try using different genres of music or radio stations that you frequently listen to and enjoy while spending time with

*(continues on page 5)*

* SHORT TAKES

## Urine Test for Cancer Being Studied

#### *With this simple option, the chances of early detection increase*

**W**

e are always looking for easier, safer ways for early cancer detection in dogs. A recent study from Virginia Tech may have found a novel way to use urine for some cancer screenings.

Specialized Raman spectroscopy techniques were used to look at urine samples from 205 dog donors. Of these dogs, 101 had been diagnosed with cancer, 89 were cancer free and healthy, and 16 had bladder or kidney problems that weren’t from cancer. Samples were collected as a free catch or via cystocentesis or catheterization. The dogs with cancer who donated samples had one of four types of cancer: lymphoma, urothelial carcinoma, osteosarcoma, or mast cell tumor. Over 90% accuracy was shown for

cancer detection looking at the individual scans, which is better and faster than current screening blood tests.

This technique could lead to at-home screening for early cancer detection and/or recurrence of a treated cancer. With fine tuning, the urine samples might assess how cancer treatment was working and help determine successful cancer treatments.■

*Front. Vet. Sci., 07 February 2024, Sec. Oncology in Veterinary Medicine, Volume 11 - 2024 | https://doi. org/10.3389/fvets.2024.1328058*

## Postop Bleeding Complications

#### *Delayed postoperative hemorrhage gene mutation found*

**V**

eterinarians always test for clotting disorders prior to surgery on dogs who have von Willebrand’s disease or are on medications that might interfere with clotting.

Delayed postoperative hemorrhage (DEPOH) is a known potential problem for many sighthound breeds, and researchers at Washington State University found a gene mutation associated with postop bleeding problems. It’s more common than initially suspected.

Recent research by Dr. Michael Court of Washington State University evaluated DNA from dogs of 75 breeds and mixed breeds. Dogs of 37 breeds had this mutation,

including French Bulldogs, Golden Retrievers, Labrador Retrievers, Shetland Sheepdogs, Border Collies, Beagles, and Yorkshire Terriers, as well as mixed breed dogs. Breeds most commonly affected include Irish Wolfhounds, Basenjis, Italian Greyhounds, Greyhounds, Scottish Deerhounds, Whippets, and Salukis.

Racing Greyhounds were the first breed in which this condition was identified. Many retired racing dogs had postoperative bleeding during otherwise routine spay/neuter surgeries. From 36 to 48 hours post-surgery, bleeding from the surgery site and severe skin bruising occurred in many dogs.

One to four days post-surgery is when clots are breaking down. The gene involved with DEPOH controls alpha-2 antiplasmin. That enzyme works to prevent premature breakdown of clots. Normal clots are formed but breakdown faster than they should. This can be fatal.

Dogs with two copies of this defect should be treated ahead of surgery and for up

to five days post op with tranexamic acid or aminocaproic acid. Washington State University Laboratory offers testing.■



*Olha Haletska | iStock*

*Court MH, et al. Identification by whole genome sequencing of genes associated with delayed postoperative hemorrhage*

*in Scottish deerhounds. J Vet Intern Med. 2023 Mar;37(2):510-517. doi:*

*10.1111/jvim.16643. Epub*



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*DEPOH was first indentified in Greyhounds.*

*2023 Feb 13.*

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* BEHAVIOR

# “Fear Free” Certification

### *This designation means the veterinarians received* special education to reduce your dog’s stress

###### Working With You There

The examination and any work that needs to be done should be done in the room with you with your dog, as much as possible. This includes vaccinations, simple blood draws, nail trims, and ear cleans. Obviously, some things like

he term “Fear Free” is a trademarked initiative, founded by Dr. Marty Becker, whose mission is to “prevent

**T**

and alleviate fear, anxiety, and stress in pets by inspiring and educating the people who care for them.” To become Fear Free certified, veterinarians and clinics must register with Fear Free, complete mandatory training, and

renew their membership annually. With this membership comes access to a wealth of information, guidance, and support, including an educational library, continuing education courses, and podcasts. If you find a Fear Free certified veterinary clinic, you can usually rest assured that your pets will feel as comfortable as possible during their veterinary visits.

But not using a Fear Free certified practice does not necessarily mean your dogs will have an unpleasant experience. “Just because a practice is not officially Fear Free certified doesn’t mean veterinarians are not ‘free’ to make their practices as dog friendly

as they like,” says Katherine Houpt, VMD, professor emeritus of behavioral medicine at Cornell University’s College of Veterinary Medicine.

###### What You Should See

If you’re considering a practice that isn’t certified, check things out before you arbitrarily dismiss them. Remember, you’re looking for signs that the veterinary clinic goes the extra mile

to minimize stress and help dogs feel comfortable when they arrive.

The reception area, aka “waiting room,” should have soft, calming lighting with enough space to maintain distance between pets. The best low-stress clinics work hard to minimize the wait in the waiting room. Most dogs will relax better in a smaller area alone with their owners while waiting for the doctor, but that isn’t always possible. If there is a disruptive dog in the reception area, a mindful stress-minimizing receptionist will escort this dog and its owner to an exam room ASAP, for the good of all.

Stress-mindful veterinary team members will speak softly, approach your dog slowly from the side, and not make direct eye contact with your dog initially.

They may sit and chat with you for a few moments before even addressing the dog, and offer treats (only with your permission), allowing your dog time

to relax. Touch should be soft, starting somewhere non-threatening on the dog’s body, and slowly working its way toward points of interest while maintaining contact the whole time.

Many dogs are most comfortable examined on the floor, but the dog should be examined wherever he is most comfortable whenever possible. This may be the table for some dogs. Maybe it’s on your lap. There should be non-slip matting on the floor. Sliding on slippery floors is stressful for dogs, especially older dogs.

1. rays, ultrasounds, anesthesia, and surgeries cannot be done in the room. But avoiding the “scary back room” as much as possible goes a long way toward helping your dog not fear the next visit when it rolls around.

If your dog is still stressed after all these things are implemented, a good low stress veterinary professional will suggest aborting the mission if it is not urgent and send home mild sedative medications for you to administer at home before the rescheduled visit. These meds frequently include trazodone and gabapentin, to be given the night before and repeated 1.5 to 2 hours before the visit.

If your dog requires a muzzle for your safety and the safety of the veterinary team members, this is fine, provided the dog tolerates the muzzle and relaxes into the procedure. If your dog objects to

the muzzle, or struggles violently once muzzled, it is again time to stop and revise the plan.

These are important components of low-stress handling for dogs. If these things are not happening, and your dog is anxious, stressed, and hates going to the vet, talk with your veterinarian. Can these things be implemented for your dog’s visits? If it’s a hard no, this may not be the right clinic for you. When looking for a veterinary clinic, ask how routine visits are handled. Pay a visit to the clinic and hang out in the waiting room for a while to get a good feel.■

**What You Should Do: *Help your veterinary team make things low stress for your dog***

* + **Skip breakfast** the day of your visit and bring yummy treats for your hungry dog. This will help keep his mind off anything he perceives as bad.
  + **Bring a favorite toy** and play with your dog while waiting for the doctor.
  + **Grab a yoga mat.** If your clinic does not offer non-slip flooring, bring your own yoga mat.
  + **Train your dog to stand for examination.** This requires some work. Ask different people to come over and be the examiner. This is well worth the effort and will go a long way toward your dog comfortably, confidently tolerating his veterinary exam.
  + **Purchase a muzzle if needed.** If your dog requires a muzzle to be safely examined, purchase your own comfortable muzzle and spend time training your dog to allow muzzle placement and to wear the muzzle with pride. This requires lots of love, reassurance, positive reinforcement, and yummy

treats.

* + **Request Happy Visits.** Happy Visits are times when you bring your dog into the clinic’s reception area and into an exam room, all while having a good time with toys and

treats. And then you leave. No strangers involved, no shots, no nail trims. Once these visits are going well, ask for a veterinary team member to come into the exam room. Again, nothing except lots of love and cookies.

*michaeljung | iStock*

* ILLNESS

# Ensuring a Perfect End

### *Euthanasia can be one of the most courageous and* unselfish decisions you will make in your life

**Y**

ou remember that crazy, silly puppy who came into your home full of energy and love. He developed into



*Marc Calleja Lopez | iStock*

a mature, loving, and fun family member you can’t imagine being without. But, then, seemingly in the blink of an eye, your dog slows down. He’s old.

You’ve spent years ensuring your dog has a great quality of life. And that remains your sacred duty now, whether he’s battling a deteriorating chronic condition or a terminal illness.

There is no standard perfect end. What you choose to do depends upon you, your dog, and his health. A dog with a bad heart and bad arthritis with osteosarcoma is different

from an otherwise healthy dog with osteosarcoma. Each dog is unique. Each situation is personal.

###### It’s Still Quality of Life

you handle physically, mentally, and financially? You dearly love your St. Bernard, but you can’t physically carry your dog up and down the stairs to your apartment. Your stress level impacts your sensitive dog and if you can’t stop crying, your dog will be stressed and unhappy too. A $50,000 heart surgery might help your dog, but can you afford to lose

your home to pay for it? These are hard questions.

You also need to sit down with your veterinarian and try to objectively look at your dog’s situation. Perhaps chemotherapy could give your dog another five or six months. For many dogs, that is a decent option. For a dog

who hates going to the clinic, who must be sedated just for an exam, or who fights any handling, it’s probably not a good option. Quality of life considerations should rank over mere quantity of life.

###### Subtle Signs of Pain

Many dogs are stoic and hide signs of pain simply to be with you and do things with you. Your veterinarian can guide you to watch for subtle signs. Does your dog’s breathing pattern change when

A good place to start is to write down your dog’s favorite things now, while you’re thinking about it. Is chasing his ball the highpoint of his day? Is eating breakfast with you and getting bits of your food the thing that makes his day? Maybe it is snuggling on the couch while you read. However silly or insignificant it seems, write down those things that make your dog’s day worth living.

Next, list the things your dog needs for basic quality of life. He must

**Make Your Own Objective Chart**

Since you have your lists made up, add a chart for daily life where you can check off how the day went. It helps to have an idea in your mind such as, if we get more bad days than good days, it is time to take action. That might mean asking about more or different pain medications or it may mean time to discuss euthanasia.

Ideally, it will help you to have a plan instead of suddenly being confronted with tough decisions. It is important to have a good (hopefully great!) relationship with your veterinarian and the veterinary staff. They will guide you, provide options, and support you as you make these decisions. The American Animal Hospital Association has a good set of guidelines for “end of life” care for pets. You can download it at: aaha.org/ aaha-guidelines/end-of-life-care.

These guidelines look at the needs of both the dog and the owner. Your dog may, at different times, benefit from palliative care and then hospice care. Palliative care means concentrating on quality of life while dealing with the illness or disease that is now affecting your dog. Hospice care concentrates on the end, when treatment is no longer working and leads to euthanasia or natural death.

*It boils down to quality of life, and it can be difficult to be objective.*

be able to eat and drink. He needs to eliminate and stay clean. He must be able to breathe comfortably. Mobility is important to prevent sores and keep muscles and nerves in good shape.

He must be kept as free from pain as possible. And that includes both mental and physical pain.

The final list is your list. What can

he has to do a long walk? Does your dog now hesitate before trying to come up the three steps into the house? Are you (be honest) now having to come up with more exotic choices to get him to eat anything? Those can all be signs of pain and exhaustion.

It can be easy to miss downward trends since you are with your dog every day. The gradual decline sort of sneaks up on you. That is why twice annual exams are important for senior dogs.

The veterinary staff will often pick up on changes that you might have missed.

###### Veterinary Checks

As your dog ages, he needs thorough veterinary evaluations. Any chronic conditions need to be identified along with treatment. Literally, a nose-to- tail exam plus a complete chemistry panel, bloodwork, and urinalysis. Your

veterinarian will check for dental disease, vision problems, identify hearing loss, and work all the way back to anal gland and prostate problems.

If your dog has incontinence (a frequent reason for euthanasia), your vet will look for treatable medical causes.

A complete neuro exam may identify some neurological problems that were passed off as arthritis or vice versa.

The goal is to find problems that can be

* ILLNESS

controlled and managed. Most senior dog health problems aren’t going to be cured, but many can be managed successfully with reasonable care and cost while maintaining quality of life.

Cognitive and anxiety problems are common in older canines. There are prescription medications such as selegiline and supplements that can help your dog. In fact, there are lots of supplements to help senior

dogs. Don’t guess at them. Work with your veterinarian to decide which supplements your dog will benefit from and to make sure your choice of supplements is compatible with any prescription medications your dog is taking. Drug interactions are common, and chronic health problems can also affect drug metabolism.

There may be a need to experiment

for your dog. This is when you need to go back to your lists and your objective chart. Is your dog eating well (how long can he exist on hand-fed vanilla ice cream)? Even if you are willing and able to carry your dog outside to eliminate, is

your dog highly stressed by being carried and/or accidents? Is your dog developing sores despite a pet orthopedic bed?

You know your dog better than anyone else, which puts a great responsibility on you to advocate for your dog. A decision for euthanasia is one of the most courageous and unselfish decisions you will make in your life.

It is best if you have a plan for how to handle this final act of love. You might be able to get a veterinarian to come to your home. Your dog will be sedated and then given the euthanasia drug to stop his heart. If you can handle it, most dogs

do best if you stay with them to reinforce your love as they leave this world.

You will also need a plan for disposal of your pet’s body. Many families elect for cremation and ask for ashes back

to bury or distribute as they feel best. If your dog is involved in any research studies such as cancer studies, consider

what samples might be taken to help dogs in the future. This is a final gift from you and your dog to other dogs.

The end of your life together is stressful for you and for your dog. Be sure to take time to simply sit quietly together on the couch, out on the porch in the sun, in the grass under the shade of his favorite tree. Some owners have ambitious bucket lists for their dogs, which is fine, but, honestly, what your dog wants and needs the most is simply to be with you.■

with various medications, especially for

arthritis and pain. Just as some people swear by acetaminophen while others thrive on aspirin, some dogs do well on meloxicam and others on gabapentin.

Your dog will probably end up with a pill counter of his own to track his medications and supplements.

###### Changes in the Home

Just as for an aging human, your senior dog may benefit from changes that make life easier. Ramps in place of stairs with suitable covers so they aren’t slippery are an easy step. Portable ramps can be used for home and for car trips. A pick-me-up harness may be another item to rent or buy.

For some dogs, claw (toenail) covers or padded nonslip foot coverings can help with mobility. Plan throw rug trails throughout the house for your dog.

Doggy diapers and wraps can help with incontinence. Dry shampoo is useful for quick clean ups. Trim long hair around your dog’s rectum, vulva, and scrotum.

A rehab specialist may help you maintain muscle mass by teaching you to do easy passive range-of-motion exercise and massage techniques at home.

Diet is so important. Older dogs need protein just like young dogs, but it must be of high quality versus large quantity. Some special diets are said to address joint and brain support but discuss

these with your veterinarian before you purchase them.

###### In the End

At some point, all your care won’t be enough to maintain good quality of life

*(masking sounds, continued from page 1)*

your dog. If you’ve ever met someone who competes in musical freestyle (aka dancing with your dog), they will tell you that their dogs often help to choose which song to dance to.

The most important thing is that your dog is not bothered by the music or other white noise that you choose to use. “Individual preferences vary, so whatever type of music, talk radio, or television show your dog seems to prefer is fine to use. Just be sure not to play it too loudly,” says Dr. Perry.

###### Extra Help

If your dog becomes extremely distressed by unusual or loud noises, masking those sounds may not provide complete relief.

Keeping your dog away from the scary sounds is the ideal solution when possible. For example, if your house is being renovated, your dog may be happier staying with a friend. On holidays that typically feature fireworks, take a trip

to a quiet spot that is away from chaotic festivities. If something spooks your dog on a walk, cross the street and head away from the noise.

Unfortunately, noise can’t always be avoided. You can try to distract your dog by giving him a tasty chew or puzzle toy loaded with special treats. It’s even better if this snack only comes out when noisy relatives are visiting or a thunderstorm

is starting. By giving your dog something scrumptious when loud noises occur, over time you may be able to condition him to have a more positive response to

those noises.

Play is another great distraction method. Engage your dog in a game or review some easy tricks that he knows well so that he has something fun to focus on.

You can, of course, combine treats, play, and training with playing some calming music or a television show.

Whatever distracts and occupies your dog during the scary noises is just fine.

###### Consider Medication

There are two main classes of anti- anxiety medications: situational and maintenance. **Situational medications** are a good fit for dogs who only experience severe noise sensitivity

for specific events, such as fireworks, thunderstorms, or construction. You can give the medication before an anticipated trigger occurs to help your dog ride it out.

**Maintenance medications** are for

dogs who experience chronic noise sensitivity and are stressed out about everyday sounds. These medications are given every day to help your dog stay calm and enjoy the world more.■

*Pamela J. Perry, DVM, PhD, is a behavior resident at Cornell University’s College of Veterinary*

*Medicine.*

* HEALTH

# Lawn Chemicals and Your Dog

**What You Can Do**

* Keep your dog off the lawn for the recommended time after applying each product or even longer.
* Read all application instructions and follow them exactly.
* Consider hiring a professional.
* Keep clothing worn while applying a product away from your dog.
* Call the ASPCA Poison Control Center (888-426-4435) or Pet Poison Helpline (855-764-7661) if you think your dog was exposed to a lawn-care chemical.
* Reduce the need for these products by changing your lawn’s grasses.

### *You can work to minimize your pet’s health risk*

any lawn afficionados use a variety of products to combat both weeds and insects who feed on grass.

**M**

These pesticides, insecticides, fertilizers, and herbicides can all be toxic to your dog, and some studies show connections to cancer.

###### How Dogs Get Exposed

Dogs are primarily exposed to lawn- care products by walking through a

treated lawn too soon after application or sniffing a treated lawn. Some chemicals may be absorbed through the skin, but many are inhaled as your dog snuffles around or swallowed when your dog licks or eats something on the grass or licks their own legs and paws.

**Signs of Toxicity**

* Vomiting
* Tremors
* Seizures
* Abnormal heart rates
* Lethargy
* Drooling
* Increased urination
* Diarrhea

Your own lawn is the obvious exposure risk, but any treated grass could potentially

expose your dog to these products. While business lawns are treated by professionals and labeled properly so you can avoid them on your walks, neighbors treating their

own lawns may not be so thorough.

We can also track lawn chemicals into the house on our shoes and clothing.

###### Acute vs. Chronic Exposure

Harm from lawn-care products can manifest in two main ways: acute toxicity and delayed chronic effects.

Acute toxicity is the easy one to identify. This is when your dog ingests or inhales a large dose of a lawn care product and becomes sick. The exact symptoms will depend on which product



*erdinhasdemir | iStock*

*Be sure that grassy playground is safe.*

your dog was exposed to, how much of it they got into, and how big your dog is.

If you suspect your dog has consumed or inhaled a large amount of lawn-care product, call a pet poison hotline (see sidebar) and head to your veterinarian.

Chronic exposure is where things get complicated. Exposure to small amounts of a harmful chemical may not have any impact right away, but negative effects can build up over time if the dog keeps getting those small doses over and over.

**Which Are Worst Isn’t Clear** Determining which chemicals can cause which problems over time is difficult. Controlled studies like this

are challenging, both financially as the researchers house dogs for many years and ethically due to the potential to cause harm.

Despite the challenges, researchers are finding trends and links. Studies have shown that dogs with cancer

are more likely to live in homes that use lawn-care products, and that Scottish Terriers are more likely

to develop transitional cell carcinoma when regularly exposed to lawn care products. They have also found that dogs have metabolites from herbicides in their urine after their home lawns are treated.

Not every dog who is exposed to a lawn-care product will develop cancer or other health problems, but each exposure increases that risk.

###### Contact Your Vet or Poison Control

The exact signs that your dog has been poisoned by a lawn- care product vary depending on the exact product she was exposed to and how much of it she ingested, inhaled, or absorbed.

If you suspect your dog is experiencing toxicity from a lawn- care product or

know that she has been exposed, call a pet-poison hotline to get the most

recent information on risks, signs, and treatment.

The severity of harmful effects will often vary depending on the “dose” that your dog was exposed to. Small

exposures may have no obvious effects at first, but chronic exposure can build up over time.

###### Safe Application

No lawn care product—be it an herbicide, pesticide, fertilizer, fungicide, insecticide—is intended to be inhaled or consumed. It is critical to use these products correctly and follow all instructions to the letter.

Many states require commercial farmers and lawn-care professionals to take safety courses and pass a licensing exam to apply pesticides, herbicides, and other products. Individual homeowners are often not required to go through these processes even though they have access to the exact same products.

One easy way to increase the safety of your lawn care is to hire a professional! Lawn-care professionals are familiar with the products they are using and have all of the personal protective equipment needed to apply the chemicals safely.

If you want to handle your lawn care yourself, protect yourself, your family, your pets, and wildlife by reading all product instructions and following safety

*(continues on page 8)*

* ASK DR. MILLER

# Family History of Cancer

### *Does it make sense to do periodic bloodwork?*

The breeder of my dog, a Papillon, said that my dog’s littermate



*Merrimon | iStock*

**Q**

had a very large tumor on her liver. Osteosarcoma. It was removed, but the dog only lived three weeks. She was 9 years old.

I have also learned that the dam died from a cancer that started as a mammary tumor but spread to the lungs before

it could be removed. In addition, three of the four puppies in the granddam’s litter died from cancers, all under the age of 5. The cancers are never the same type, I am told. One of the veterinarians

right. If the dog isn’t itself over several days or so, a trip to your veterinarian is indicated. The results of that visit may be inconclusive but could indicate

additional testing, even the DNA testing, is indicated. If there is evidence of a tumor, it would be in its early stages and potentially more amenable to treatment. Now for the question of diet. I’ve seen no scientific data to suggest that a superdiet, one filled with antioxidants, etc., will prevent cancer. You must be careful with homemade diets like raw ones. They can be very unbalanced in their vitamin and mineral content which can have a negative impact on the dog’s health. Bacterial contamination is a whole other issue. If the diet is balanced, complete, and well prepared and stored,

involved in these cases said that the cancers were not related, but that cancer

*Papillons are smart, energetic, and athletic, and excel in dog sports.*

it should be fine for your dog without any additions.■

is prevalent in these dogs (meaning that

line of dogs, not Papillons in general).

Worried, I spoke to my own veterinarian who said that the only thing that could be done was special bloodwork every six months. It’s expensive. The

**Recurrent Bladder Stone Surgeries**

##### *Diet can help, but it’s important to know the type of stones removed*



*:Natasha Brown | iStock*

breeder is considering working with an online veterinarian to see what can be done diet-wise. It’s difficult for me to believe that fighting off cancer could be as simple as a change in diet.

It’s three generations of these dogs with cancer, so I don’t want to ignore it. Is there anything I can do? Is bloodwork every six months worth the cost? Does nutrition make a difference? It’s not like I feed “cheap” food. I feed a raw diet and am going to add CBD oil.

I routinely massage my dog, so I

I have a female Jindo (4 years old) who

has had two surgeries to remove bladder stones, in 2022 and again in 2024. The first time they found five stones and the second one larger store.

**Q**

I live in South Korea and work for the U.S. government.

The veterinarian gave me nothing special to do

*The Korean Jindo dog is an energetic dog known for its forward pointing ears and tracking ability.*

not all, types of stones and may not prevent the development of new ones.

The best advice for dogs with multiple episodes of stone

formation is to have the stones analyzed to see what they are made of. Once that is known, a specific treatment plan can be developed.

should notice lumps. I will stick to annual bloodwork at this point, but I wondered if I should reconsider. Thank you.

**A**

You don’t ask easy questions. The new cancer screening blood tests are

looking for alteration in your dog’s DNA and appear to predict the development of cancer with some accuracy. The one published study that I read suggested that the test was reliable. Since this is new technology, more studies are needed to determine the overall accuracy of DNA testing for cancer. The testing

appears to be pricy. At least at this point, I still believe that the best detector of illness, be it metabolic or cancerous, is the dog’s owner. Most cancers don’t go from undetectable to fatal overnight. If you know your dog and pay attention

to it, you know when something isn’t

after the first surgery. After this second surgery, I was given Royal Canin Urinary S/O and a supplement of glucosamine and cranberry pulp.

The pain Oreo is enduring must be terrible, and I have to pay the bills. Do you have any suggestions?

**A**

There are many different kinds of urinary tract stones in dogs.

Some are a consequence of bladder inflammation, especially that associated with infections, while

others are considered metabolic stones.



**Do You Have a Health Concern?**

*Send your health questions to DogWatch editor-in-chief William H. Milller, Jr., VMD, professor emeritus of medicine,*

*section section of dermatology, at Cornell University’s College of Veterinary Medicine. Email* [*dogwatcheditor@cornell.edu.*](mailto:dogwatcheditor@cornell.edu)

Those stones are a result of metabolic abnormalities in your dog. The Royal Canin Urinary S/O diet you were given will help dissolve some, but

If they are struvite stones, those typically associated with infection, a complete evaluation of her urinary tract is indicated to find out why she has recurrent infections.

If they are metabolic in nature, a specific diet change or the addition of supplements to the diet may prevent the development of new stones. This job isn’t an easy one but should prevent her some discomfort and save some money in the long run.■

* ASK DR. HOUPT

# Messy Car-Ride Problems

### *Puppy shows her fear in a fairly unusual way*

I have a 6-month-old Goldendoodle puppy. Every time she gets in the



*:Diomedes Ramos Cruz | iStock*

**Q**

car she defecates, before we even get out of the driveway. She is outgoing and not afraid of much, but the car seems to be her worst nightmare. I would appreciate any suggestions you might have.

**A**

Defecating in the car is a fairly rare presentation because moSt dogs

drool or vomit. The first thing to do (after you have covered your car seat in plastic) is to determine if she is carsick. Most dogs who are carsick vomit rather than defecate, but your puppy may be

*(lawn chemicals, continued from page 6)*

guidelines. Take the time to calculate the size of your lawn accurately, wear protective gear, and take off any exposed clothing before you go back in the house. Product labels are a good place to start,

but for the full story you will need to look up each product’s safety data sheet.

For our dogs, the most important piece of information is how long to keep your dog off the lawn after applying a product. Most products take one to two days to absorb into the ground or be washed off. Waiting a full 48 hours before allowing your dog onto a treated lawn is the safest option.

Note: Organic and “pet friendly” products can still be harmful to your dog if eaten. These products often still have a drying time where you will need to

the exception. Your veterinarian may prescribe Cerenia, a medication for carsickness.

Meanwhile, teach her to love car rides. Feed her meals on the ground beside the car for a week, then with the bowl on the floor of the car (she can stand on the ground and reach the bowl, then in on the back seat of the car (or behind the seat if she usually travels there). The idea is that after three weeks of no motion associated with the car, she may be less likely to have a bowel movement. Try a short drive after the

*Many dogs find comfort riding in a secured crate when traveling.*

three-week training period. Be sure to take her nice places such as parks and trails so she doesn’t associate car rides with veterinary visits.

You might try having her in a crate in the car. Cover the crate with a blanket because seeing the landscape slide by may be triggering the gastrointestinal activity.

Good luck and let’s hope she grows out of it.■

keep your dog off the lawn to prevent any accidental ingestion.■

*(Westie, continued)*

are simple things you can do to reduce the risk of being bitten. First, sleeping on furniture, especially in beds, is a privilege for dogs, not a right. She should not be on your couch or bed.

To accomplish this, have her wear a harness with a leash dragging. Block access to the couch with upside down chairs or its cushions when you are not

using it, so she will get out of the habit.

When you are using it say, “Off,” and

lure her from the couch with a treat and

**Westie Needs to Learn the Rules**

##### *Consistent training should be able to end this battle*

use the leash to “help” her down. We think that dogs on couches think they are bigger dogs, so are more likely to bite.

In both the living room and bedroom

I have never had a small dog until now, a West Highland White Terrier.

**Q**

She has done something I have never had with the four Labradors I’ve raised.

I was eating a sandwich on the couch. Molly was next to me and made a lunge toward my food. I said, “No,” and pushed her away. She growled at me and bared her teeth.

The second time, she had a dirty ball in her mouth and wouldn’t release it. She growled again and bit at me.

The last time, we were in bed sleeping and I put my hand on her back. She growled and bit at me.

I’m concerned about this behavior.

I am afraid she might actually bite someone else. What can I do to stop her from biting me or anyone else?

**A**

What an aggressive Westie! How could that be? I thought all of them

were like the two I have owned, which were complete angels. Seriously, there

provide a really soft bed for her so that she will be more comfortable than on the bed. You may have to use the harness

and leash to tether her so she can’t access your bed or put her in a crate at night.

Do obedience with her for five minutes a day (take a class if you aren’t experienced). Use our article in the March 2024 issue to teach her a cue to drop the ball and anything else in her mouth. If these suggestions don’t work, consider working with a veterinary behaviorist or fear-free trainer.■



**Do You Have a Behavior Concern?**

*Send your behavior questions to Cornell’s renowned behavior expert Katherine Houpt, VMD, Ph.D., shown here with Yuki, her West Highland White Terrier. Email dogwatcheditor@ cornell.edu or mail to DogWatch, 535 Connecticut Ave., Norwalk, CT 06854-1713.*

***Coming Up …***

* ***Should You Worry When a Dog Won’t Eat?***
* ***Diseases of the Intact Male Dog***
* ***Canine Osteochondritis Dissecans (OCD)***
* ***Stray vs. Lost vs. Feral Dogs***
* ***Dog Tail Injuries***