

What do I need to know about Fireworks and my Pet?

Noise Phobia is an excessive, unreasonable fear response to specific loud noises. It is more common in dogs than cats. The most common noise phobias are to fireworks and thunder. If your dog is fearful during fireworks, try to determine the severity based on these descriptions:

MILD (somewhat anxious): As prevention or to treat a mild response, try a canine "Fireworks Party." Start with the first faint sound fireworks. YOU respond with a happy, "It's a fireworks party!" Then happily run to the fridge to see what treats (e.g. chicken or bread) are available for the dog. Then keep some with you, and every boom triggers a "party snack" until the dog is happily waiting for the next boom.

MODERATE (no response to the "party plan" above): In addition to the above, medicate the Pet for several hours on days when fireworks are expected. Drugs like Prozac are not helpful because they need to be given for 2-4 weeks before they begin to work. A good option is a "comfort medication" called, Trazodone. ("Traz"). Try providing a "safe place" such as a portable kennel with blankets covering it.

SEVERE (a panicking dog): Combine Trazodone with a second calming medication, Clonidine. Give both medications at the same time.

Medication: It usually takes 30-60 min after you give **either medication** to see any effect. Peak effect is at about 2-4 hours after administration, then it tapers off. Giving medication with some food is a good idea, but not required. However, if the dog is already scared, the digestive process is slowed, so it may take 4 hours or longer to see onset. Therefore, "give it before you need it," which is ideally about 1 hour before fireworks. Ideally, the Pet is simply much LESS fearful.

Contraindications: Do not give to dogs on medication for Seizure, Heart, Liver, or Kidney conditions.

Side Effects: Some dogs respond to behavior medication by getting hyper-excitable and nervous (they may not understand why they feel differently). Other possible side effects include lethargy and sometimes vomiting. All these effects will wear off, but don't give any additional doses. Schedule a consult.

Test Run: Give one dose before it is needed when you are home to observe. Test by putting the Pet in some unusual situation, e.g. PetSmart visit. Next time you can safely halve the dose if too much, or double if no visible effect. Test the new dose the same way you tested the first for comparison.

Frequency: Either medication can be repeated as needed (usually after 4-8 hrs), but not within 2 hours, because you haven't seen the full results of what you have already given.

If your dog needs these meds, **call in advance (503) 905-5200** and indicate if you want one or both medications. Pick up the meds at a Hannah Health & Education Center. We typically send home 10 tabs – just call if you need more. There is no charge for this medication – it is included in your Hannah plan.

Trazodone "Traz" For Dogs – Moderate			Severe, add Clonidine	
Wt. (lbs)	Traz Dose	Tab Size	Clonidine Dose	Tab Size
<5 lbs.	¼ of a	50 mg tab	¼ of a	0.1 mg tab
5-9	½	50 mg tab	½ of a	0.1 mg tab
10-14	1	50 mg tab	1	0.1 mg tab
15-20	1 ½	50 mg tab	1 ½	0.1 mg tab
20-29	1	100 mg tab	1	0.2 mg tab
30-49	1 ½	100 mg tab	1 ½	0.2 mg tab
50-69	2	100 mg tab	2	0.2 mg tab
70-99	2 ½	100 mg tab	2 ½	0.2 mg tab
100+	3	100 mg tab	3	0.2 mg tab

Traz and Clonidine can be given together in severe cases.

