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**Fears and Phobias**

If your pet is scared of fireworks, don't wait till Nov 5<sup>th</sup> to find a cure, there are things you can start to do now that will help to minimise the stress of loud noises including fireworks.

**Adaptil** is a synthetic copy of Dog Appeasing Pheromone which a mother dog produces to comfort her puppies. It has been clinically proven to help reduce stress in many situations and can be helpful around fireworks time. It comes as a diffuser – much like a plug in air freshener, a spray and a collar. The ideal time to start using **Adaptil** is a few weeks before you expect the stress event so think about starting to use these now. **Feliway** is a similar product for cats. Cats may show stress in different ways to dogs so we should consider them too at this time of year.

**Calmex** is a supplement which contains naturally occurring milk proteins and amino acids like tryptophan which act on the brain to give a calming effect. Calmex comes in capsules for dogs and a new suspension for cats which can be put on their food and makes it much easier to give. Again these are much better given a few weeks before the stress event like fireworks night or even going to cattery or kennels.

**Diazepam** – some really severe cases of noise phobia do require much stronger prescription medication. This is only given under strict veterinary supervision so please contact us if you think your pet requires this.

Other simple measures we can take include the following:

Make the most of the light in the evenings and try to get into a routine of taking your dog out for a reasonable length walk before it is dark, this will ensure they are hungry and tired and not likely to need the loo. A big dinner should then help to ensure a dog who wants to curl up and relax in the evening.

Make sure your pets are in before dark, close doors & windows and the cat flap. Distract them with new toys or a chew. Don't leave them while you go out to watch the display.

Provide a den or hiding place – frightened animals will naturally seek a safe place – this may be somewhere your pet has hidden before. Use blankets to make a nice cosy retreat.

Muffle the sound by closing curtains and put the TV or music on quite loud. Stay calm yourself, don't get angry with your pet no matter what they do but don't over-fuss them, this can encourage fear behaviour

Talk to your Vet. Noise phobia can become really debilitating for some pets so act now to implement these short term measures but also consider if your pet needs longer term behaviour therapy to overcome their fears. Some useful websites include

[www.secrettohappypets.com](http://www.secrettohappypets.com) and [www.soundtherapy4pets.com](http://www.soundtherapy4pets.com)

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**Office:** Weekdays 8.30 - 6pm, Sat 8.30 - 12noon

**Consulting times:**

Weekdays 9 - 10am and 5 - 6pm, Sat 9 - 11am

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