

# K9INTUITION

BEHAVIOUR ADVICE  
THUNDERSTORMS



THE BEST PAW FORWARD  
FOR YOUR DOG!

When you are treating a dog with thunder storm issues, it's really more about managing the situation for the dog to enable the dog to feel as secure and safe as possible and limiting the exposure she has to the noise and visual elements of the storm. Sadly desensitisation by gentle exposure to recordings of the noise of thunder does not work. Thunder storms can have several elements to them including:

- thunder
- lightening
- rain
- winds
- darker skies
- pressure changes in atmosphere
- static

The only one of these elements that we could actually desensitise for would be the thunder itself. But because of all the other elements, there is simply no point. Affected dogs are getting signals from all of these cues that its time to be frightened.

So there are four main things we can do to help our dogs:

1. Build your dog a den - a safe place.
2. Take anti-static measures
3. pheromones etc
4. medication



### Build your dog a den - a safe place.

If your dog uses a crate put it in a place that she is already comfortable with - or watch when there is a storm to see where she tries to go and place the crate/or make the den as close to that area as possible. Cover the crate on all sides and the top and back - just leaving the door side uncovered. This way your dog is not worried about anything approaching her from any angle except the door area. This will help make her feel secure. Try and compete with the noise of the storm by playing soothing music (**Through a dog's ear** see on line suppliers or apps on your phone) and place the source of the music close to her den. Make the den as comfy as possible.

### Take anti-static measures

There was a product called Storm Defender which was a dog jacket with a metallic lining which discharges a dogs fur and helps stop static build up therefore reducing the amount of static shock the dog gets. Its the static and the pressure changes in the atmosphere that researchers believe dogs pick up on WAY before the storm actually starts, which causes them to start acting anxiously. Unfortunately, these jackets are no longer available. However, there are specific pet anti static sprays



on the market - you may need to reapply this regularly but it will help.

## Pheromones etc

It is recommended that your dog wear a pheromone collar which would help him to feel more relaxed and secure - ADAPTIL collar is a collar which emits dog-appeasing pheromones - in this case the pheromones are a man made version of the hormone produced when a bitch is giving birth to and nursing her puppies, intended to promote secure and calm behaviour. The Adaptil range also comes in a spray, diffuser and chew form. The collar should be kept on 24 hours a day. Do not clip the lead to the Adaptil collar - a normal collar should be used for this purpose. **For more information please see [www.adaptil.com/uk](http://www.adaptil.com/uk)**



It was also recommended that Pet Remedy products be used in conjunction with the Adaptil collar. Pet Remedy is a valerian based blends of oils which act by increasing the amount of GABA that the brain produces. GABA is a chemical which is transmitted from nerve to nerve and sends calming messages to the body in times of stress. **For more information please see [www.petremedy.co.uk](http://www.petremedy.co.uk)**

## Medication

Prescription anti-anxiety medications can be used for thunder storm issues. **You will need to make an appointment to see your vet to have your dog examined and to discuss medication. Veterinary surgeons are the only people who can prescribe prescription drugs for an animal.**

There is absolutely no harm in comforting your dog - gone are the days when we were advised not to hugs or sooth our dogs if they were displaying fear or anxiety! As long as the soothing and comforting that you do to your dog is slow movements, a low pitched voice and calming tone, you will certainly do no harm. The faster you speak, the higher pitched your voice, the faster the movements you do to your dog - the less you will comfort her and the more you will wind her up! This is another example of a great time for a massage. You can't help but do that slowly!

You could also try a thunder shirt on your dog. These shirts basically give your dog a hug - they work in a similar way to hugging a distressed person to help calm them and they help the dog to feel secure but only if they are happy wearing one!

*For further advice on helping your dog cope with thunder storms or if you are experiencing any behavioural difficulties with your puppy or adult dog from anxieties to aggression - humping to house training - barking to biting and MANY more.....contact Mary at **K9INTUITION** for help and advice at [k9intuitionworks@gmail.com](mailto:k9intuitionworks@gmail.com) or visit the website [www.k9intuition.works](http://www.k9intuition.works)*

