

Diagnosing separation-related anxiety

Your vet will undertake a full physical health check and will also assess your dog's emotional and cognitive health. Before commencing treatment it is very important to have an accurate diagnosis of the underlying reason for your dog's distress.

Can separation-related anxiety be **managed**?

Yes, there are steps that you can take to help your dog become more independent. If your vet diagnoses that anxiety is the reason for the distress they will develop a comprehensive treatment plan that may involve behaviour training and anti-anxiety medication.

TALK TO YOUR VETERINARY PRACTICE TODAY IF YOUR DOG IS SHOWING ANY SIGNS OF SEPARATION-RELATED DISORDERS!



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Separation-Related Anxiety in Dogs



What is **separation-related anxiety**?

Separation-related anxiety (commonly referred to as “separation anxiety”) is a condition in which affected dogs may exhibit signs of distress when left alone, such as when their caregiver leaves the home for work or to run an errand. Research has shown that separation-related anxiety affects up to 17% of dogs. Dogs may have an inherited predisposition to separation-related anxiety, or it can be acquired, depending on the dog’s history.

One of the possible emotional motivations in these contexts is anxiety but there are other reasons why dogs may become distressed when alone. Not all separation-related behaviours are caused by anxiety.

It is important to remember that your dog is not being spiteful but is suffering from a readily manageable medical condition.

What causes separation-related anxiety?

No one has a definitive answer about the cause of separation-related anxiety, which can develop at any age in either sex and has been diagnosed in all breeds. Potential triggers of separation-related anxiety include:



Inherited predisposition



Situational anxiety and fear e.g., noise/storm sensitivity



Limited early experiences



Changes in the caregiver's work schedule or daily routine



Moving to a different residence



New caregiver or family



Alteration of the family structure through birth or death



Aging and decline of cognition



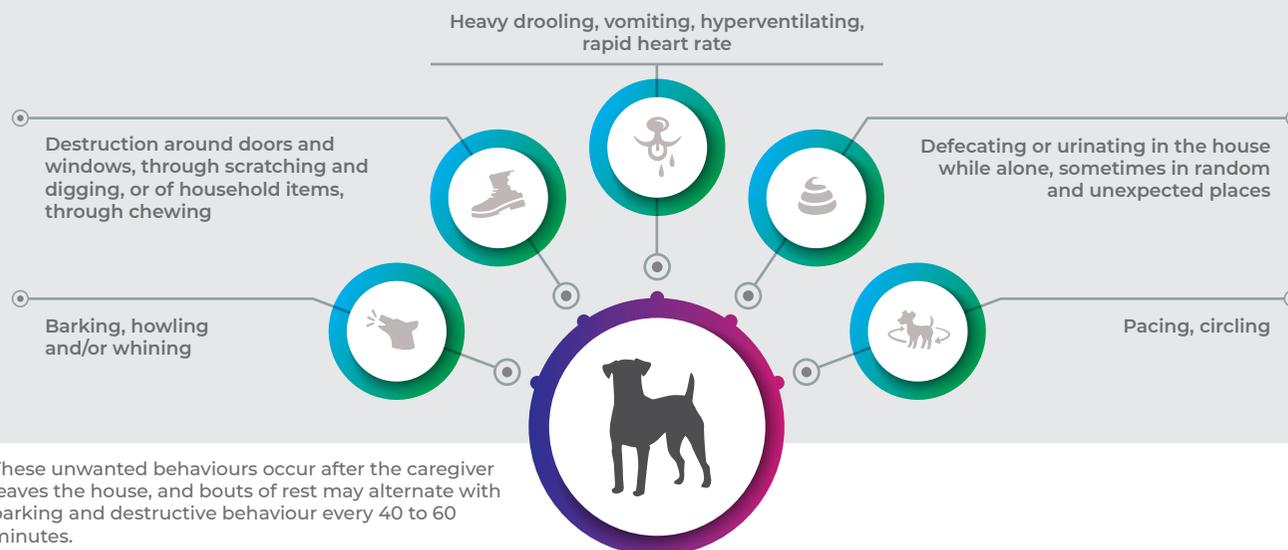
Generalised anxiety



Physical health problems e.g., chronic pain

What are the signs of separation-related anxiety in dogs?

The more common behaviours associated with separation-related anxiety include:



Getting help

While these behaviours can be problematic for you and your neighbours, it is important to remember that they also indicate that your pet is distressed. Getting help is really important and you should ask your veterinary practice for advice as soon as you notice any signs. Do not wait as these problems are likely to get worse with time and behavioural modification programmes are going to be more effective the sooner they are started.