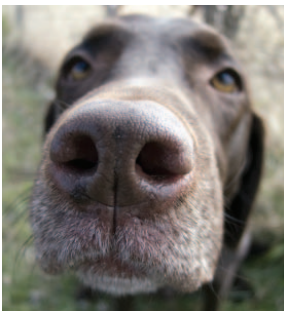


easelpettips



Using Pheromones on Dogs

A pheromone is a secreted or excreted chemical factor that triggers a social response in members of the same species.



Pheromones are chemicals capable of acting outside the body of the secreting individual to impact the behavior of the receiving individual. There are alarm pheromones, food trail pheromones, sex pheromones, and many others that affect behavior or physiology.

Dog Appeasing Pheromone (DAP), called Comfort Zone when sold over the counter, is a chemical developed to calm dogs. It is used for general stress, separation anxiety, travel, and noise phobias such as those caused by storms or fireworks.

One alternative you might see on store shelves are pheromone-based products, which were first introduced in the U.S. in 2001.

A randomized clinical study published in 2008 examined the effects of DAP on puppies enrolled in socialization classes. The study found that puppies receiving the hormone exhibited less anxiety and more positive interactions with other puppies than those receiving placebos. A double-blind, placebo-controlled study published in 2007 analyzed its effects on newly-adopted puppies aged 6 to 10 weeks; it found that DAP treatment induced a statistically significant reduction in crying among gun dogs only, and did not influence soiling.

Most of the research that's been published or presented at veterinary conferences has been done on Feliway (cat pheromones) and DAP. In several studies — most of which were funded by the products' maker — both products were found to help soothe stressed pets in some circumstances.

Dog pheromones are not effective for aggression problems in dogs. Veterinarians also caution that behavioral problems can have medical causes, so pets should be thoroughly checked out by their vet before treating a problem as strictly behavioral, such as excessive barking.



Some owners would rather not use drugs to treat a stressed dog or cat. Although the literature says the products are safe, this is the type of product that might not have been as thoroughly tested as drugs for humans are. Do a thorough research on a drug product before using it on your pets. If you choose to use pheromones, always follow the instructions carefully, monitor any behavior changes, and never use any chemical product in excess.

Additional resources (click on links for more info)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dog_appeasing_pheromone

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2839826>

<http://pets.webmd.com/features/pet-pheromone-products-for-behavior-problems?print=true>

<http://pets.webmd.com/dogs/guide/tips-safe-air-travel-pet>