

Stress triggers

- Pain, illness, trauma or bereavement
- Conflict situations, panic, being ready for defence (visitors, children thunder, noise)
- Too much / too little contact with dogs
- Punishment / feeling threatened
- Excitement, going to a new place
- Running for something / repetitive activities (balls, frisbees, jogging)
- Not enough time to sleep or relax
- Feeling worried or scared
- Guarding a treasure
- Excess or lack of exercise
- Not enough mental stimulation

- Lack of successful coping strategies (too much obedience can prevent dogs from thinking for themselves)
- Not enough choices / lack of control of their environment
- Too short a lead - being yanked or pulled
- Our own emotions - grief, sadness
- Lack of appropriate environment (welfare) eg., being shut in crate, tied up - cannot escape, at home too long, hunger, inappropriate diet

Adrenaline is triggered in seconds

Too much = **STRESS**



Signs / consequences of stress

HIGH CORTISOL LEVELS CAN LEAD TO:

- Reoccurring Ear infections
- Itchy Skin - Allergies - Poor Coat
- Digestion problems - IBS, Diarrhoea
- Pre-diabetes
- Anxiety
- Lethargy
- Excitability
- Reactive behaviour (aggression)
- Excessive barking
- Noise sensitivities
- Humping
- Poor concentration

- Resource guarding
- Chewing or scratching the body
- Chronic insomnia
- Compromised immune system
- Inappropriate defecating
- Coprophagia (eating faeces)
- Pica (eating foreign objects)
- Tail chasing / spinning
- Shaddow / light chasing
- Hallucinations (imaginary flies etc)
- Fabric / floor licking
- Ball obsession
- Pacing

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HAPPY HEALTHY DOG

STRESS

HOW TO RECOGNISE
AND MANAGE STRESS



Many behavioural and physical problems arise from stress. Recognise the signs and triggers and help your dog to be happy and healthy

Physiological Reactions

- Adrenaline can be triggered in seconds
- It can take 2-6 days to leave the body
- Neuropeptides, ADH, gastric juices are produced=urination, vomiting diarrhoea
- Adrenaline can build up in the body
- High adrenaline leads to Cortisol
- Cortisol takes 4-6 weeks to leave the body, but it can take 9-10 months to repair the damage in the brain

Acute stress puts the body into “Fight or Flight” mode

- The central nervous system shuts down
- Increased heart rate
- High blood pressure
- High blood sugar
- Digestion shuts down
- Bronchiols dilate - breathing increases
- Dogs will drool and pant

Together with adrenaline-reducing activities, consider a therapy that may help to relax such as Massage or Acupoint Therapy., or an Herbal Choices consultation with herbs oils for maintenance and wellbeing

HOW TO REDUCE STRESS

Remove the stressors
Observe and be aware of your dog

- Understand adrenaline build-up & triggers
- Introduce social walks with other dogs
- Mental stimulation is vital for health
- Slow sniffing walks are best for muscles and the brain
- Use a well-fitting harness & long (3m) lead
- Let your dog sniff and decide the direction of the walk
- Treat searches / nosework / scentwork / tracking / finding things
- Get your dog to find a ball or object instead of throwing



Feed a species appropriate diet with high quality ingredients. Dogs are carnivores designed to eat meat, offal and bone (raw bone never cooked). Their digestive systems are not designed to eat large amounts of starch or fibre. Grain-free is not starch/carb free. Carbohydrate = sugar

- Give your dog some CHOICES
- Where and how long to sniff
- A variety of places to sleep
- Toys - lots for them to select from
- Things to chew
- Visit NEW places regularly at all ages to keep the brain healthy



Invest in a well-fitting harness - V at the sternum, shoulders free (Haqihana)



Make dogs feel safe and secure. Give them choice to move freely. Provide rest and recovery time. Adult dogs need 16-18 hours of sleep