

# healthful pets

optimising your pets health naturally

## Newsletter...

October 2015

### BONFIRE & FIREWORKS special addition

#### Ask a Question

#### How can I prepare for Bonfire Night?

##### Fireworks - Dealing with Anxiety

Fireworks can be a source of fear for many animals with their loud bangs and flashes. So plan ahead to make sure your pets are safe. Do not take your dog to a firework event or leave them outside. Detailed below are some tips to help make fireworks less frightening for your pet:

- Keep your cats and dogs indoors. If your cat is normally out during the day and doesn't return until dusk, consider whether you should keep them in all day, to avoid them being frightened by early fireworks.
- Walk your dog mid-afternoon or at dusk before there is any chance of fireworks starting.
- Bring your pet's feeding time forward by around an hour to settle them earlier than usual, without hugely interrupting the normal routine. Pets may also be too anxious to eat once the fireworks start
- Consider playing, at a low volume, a recording of firework sounds (CD, You Tube, internet) so your pets can get used to the distressing noises. However if your animal is very distressed by the noises, it is suggested that you visit seek help from an animal behaviourist. See: [www.thekennelclub.org.uk/kcai](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/kcai).
- On Bonfire night itself, try and behave as normally as possible as dogs know when their routine has changed and this may add to stress of the evening! Stay calm yourself and ignore the firework noises. If you are worrying, your pet may pick up on this.
- Put the radio or TV on (maybe turning it up slightly) as a source of distraction and to help drown out the noises outside
- Ensure windows are shut and close the curtains to reduce the sounds and to block out the flashing lights of the fireworks. You may even consider to put something at the bottom of doors to block the sound out
- Shut any cat flaps to stop your cat or dog escaping
- Consider making a safe haven / den for your dog to go if frightened
- Let your dog have a piece of clothing or something with your scent on, so they feel secure
- Be prepared to stay with them. Be reassuring but don't over fuss or punish your pet when scared as this may create a bigger problem in the future.
- Provide extra tasty food and treats. Feed your pet with their favourite food.
- Have their favourite toys around for them to play with. Play your pets favourite games but don't force them to play.
- Make sure the water bowl is full as anxious dogs pant and have increased thirst

- Ascertain whether any neighbours are planning to set fireworks off
- Make sure your dog has their collar and ID tags on, in case of escape
- Consider herbal supplementation – such as Dorwest Scullcap & Valerian, Dorwest Organic Valerian (discussed overleaf) or natural calming diffuser such as Pet Remedy spray or diffusers which contain valerian, vetiver, sweet basil and sage, with their de-stressing properties being slowly released into the surrounding area.



If you are particularly worried consult your Vet who can refer you to a professional animal behaviourist for help.

## Product Focus

### Dorwest Scullcap & Valerian Dorwest Valerian Compound (for Dogs & Cats)

With Fireworks night upon us we thought this month's product focus would be on two products which help relieve anxiety.

Anxiety and nervous behaviour in dogs and cats can encompass an array of conditions with many varied causes that may need different actions.

Herbal products are ideal to induce calm and relaxed demeanour, but some cases will also benefit from the use of behavioural techniques from a qualified animal behaviourist.

Specific situations can cause anxiety - such as thunderstorms, fireworks, travelling, meeting strangers, going into kennels, visits to the vets or just a new experience or an unfamiliar place. Often the problem is not really nervousness but fear or apprehension of what is expected when a new situation arises. This is often the case with young dogs but correct training and appropriate support will help them overcome this as they mature.

On-going or habitual anxiety or nervousness may have various causes and a range of techniques used with longer term use of Dorwest herbal medicines may be needed to overcome this, but with time improvement can be achieved.

In old age some dogs can suffer from anxiety that may be due to deterioration of sensory function associated with age and the resulting feeling of loss of role and function. This may result in disorientation, random barking, inability to settle and general restlessness.

Rescued or re-homed dogs may have issues from their previous life and can take some time to adjust and so can benefit from calming support as they learn to adapt.

#### So:

- Plan ahead for situations which may be fearful
- Make a plan of action on how you are to deal with the problem and stick to it

- Be aware of signs of anxiety as your pet ages
- Instil confidence and security through positive behaviour
- Consult a qualified professional for behavioural / training advice if needed

### Dorwest - Scullcap & Valerian (tablets)

Dorwest Scullcap & Valerian tablets are a licensed veterinary herbal medicine to relieve anxiety, nervousness and excitability in pets and help relaxation. Ideal for long term use and can be given indefinitely or for as long as required for a calmer and more relaxed disposition.



Does not cause drowsiness or impair normal behaviour or performance making it ideal for those needing to be settled for travelling, training or obedience work. Given prior to a journey they will calm nervous travellers and is useful where new surroundings or situations might cause apprehension or anxiety. In cats, this tablet is also effective to control territorial spraying as the tranquilising effect reduces the impulse to mark territory.

**Dosing Instructions:** Dogs and cats need 1-2 tablets per 5kgs bodyweight daily depending on the severity of the condition, dividing the total dose into two and give morning and evening. For use on singular occasions, give 12 hours and 2 hours before event using the higher dosage rate.

### Dorwest Valerian (Organic) Compound (liquid)

For anxiety in a specific 'one off' or unexpected situations this liquid, containing three herbal extracts (organic extracts of vervain 50%, valerian root 25% and mistletoe 25% - conforming to British Herbal Pharmacopoeia standards), will work quickly to relax and settle dogs within half an hour of administration. For cats, putting a few drops on the bedding induces a calm state by giving off an aroma which cats find reassuring. You can also



add to food, directly into their mouth or they will lick it off their paw. For dogs, it should be given by mouth or try in food. May be used in addition to Dorwest Scullcap & Valerian tablets in particularly stressful situations.

#### Dosing Instructions:

**For cats:** a few drops on bedding and a further 1/4 teaspoon by mouth or in food when fireworks are severe.

**For dogs:** by mouth or in food. Small dogs - 1/4 teaspoonful, medium dogs - 1/2 teaspoonful, large dogs - 1 teaspoonful, giant breeds - 1 - 1 1/2 teaspoonfuls.

#### For both products:

**Use from 8 weeks of age. Not recommended during pregnancy and lactation. Can be given in conjunction with other medication. In addition for the Valerian Compound, caution should be taken when administering to exotic cats with low body fat, as very occasionally hyperactivity has been induced.**

#### How soon before Fireworks Night do I need to start preparing?

##### For severe phobias: One month to go

- Ensure you have purchased your Scullcap & Valerian tablets and / or Valerian Compound
- Pets with severe phobias will benefit from being given Scullcap & Valerian tablets three to four weeks before the event

##### For moderate phobias: 10 days to go

- Start giving Scullcap & Valerian tablets twice daily, every day now

##### One day to go

Even if you haven't given any Scullcap & Valerian tablets before today, you should still notice some benefit from giving them now. You can also give double the normal dose when fireworks are at their worst, ensuring that the second dose of the day is given two hours before dusk.

##### 5th November – the BIG day

Scullcap & Valerian tablets, even if started this late can provide some benefit. If you own a cat, drop some Valerian Compound on the bedding. Valerian Compound is also useful to give to cats and dogs by mouth, in case an especially loud noise warrants a 'top-up'.