



# What you need to know about™ Canine separation anxiety

*Include daily walks and play time with your dog as part of your schedule whenever possible.*

## Steps to Follow

- **B**e positive
- **O**nly reward calm behavior
- **N**o more drama when you come and go
- **D**evelop your dog's independence

## It's not you. It's not your dog.

Dogs with separation anxiety (SA) exhibit problematic behaviors when left alone. The stress of your departures may trigger these behaviors. And you and your pet are not alone. It's estimated that as many as 10 million dogs (up to 17% of the pet population) suffer from SA, with fewer than 1 million receiving treatment.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, this condition is treatable, and medications combined with behavior modification produce measurable results.<sup>2</sup>

A thorough history and physical examination (including blood tests) may be needed to definitively diagnose SA and rule out other medical or behavioral diagnoses. Once the diagnosis is made, one suggested treatment for canine SA includes a behavior modification plan. The training can be used in conjunction with appropriate medical treatment to increase your dog's receptivity to the simple training techniques that create positive behavior.

## Follow the simple BOND™ plan

**Be Positive.** Be sure to focus on positive behaviors. Affection, treats, and toys can be used to reward positive behavior. **Only reward calm behavior.** You should ignore your dog if it greets you too excessively when you arrive home or exhibits other attention-seeking behaviors.

**No more drama when you come and go.** Don't make a big deal about leaving the house—don't even say "goodbye." A good exercise is to prepare to leave when you're not really going anywhere. Grab your keys and then put them away. Put on your coat, but then sit down. **Develop your dog's independence.** Teach your dog to stay settled in a specified area so it has a consistent place to feel secure when you are away. By developing your dog's independence, you are encouraging your pet to have its own space without anxiety or fear. ■

## Signs of Separation Anxiety

- Easiest to recognize
- Destructive behavior
  - Excessive barking or whining
  - Inappropriate elimination or urination
  - Excessive salivation
  - Vomiting
  - Pacing
  - Self-injury
  - Anorexia
  - Withdrawal or inactivity
- More difficult to recognize

## REFERENCES

1. Elanco Market Research: February 2006.
2. **Effects of Reconcile (fluoxetine) chewable tablets plus behavior management for canine separation anxiety.** Simpson BS, Landsberg GM, Reisner IR, et al. *Vet Ther* 8:18-31, 2007.

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