

# Free your pet from freak outs

Your pet's fight-or-flight response is hurting him (or her!), and it's causing you stress as well. Let's work through this together.

**Y**our pet has been identified as suffering from anxiety associated with veterinary visits. Don't worry—it happens! And our team is ready to help with anti-anxiety medicine. If you've got time before you get a chance to talk to the veterinarian about this, here are some common questions other pet owners have asked about pre-visit medication.

## How do I know my pet is stressed?

Pets exhibit anxiety in a variety of ways. Our team has been trained to recognize body language in pets. Your pet may seem hyperactive or pant, jump up and down, hide or freeze in place. And just because pets aren't "acting out" doesn't mean they're not experiencing stress. Talk to us about the signs of stress we see—and be assured we really *can* help your pet manage fear and anxiety.

## Why does my pet need drugs?

The veterinarian may suggest medication to help your pet feel less afraid. These are *not* sedatives. Rather, they're medications designed to modify normal brain chemistry to increase a sense of wellbeing. When pets feel fear, their brains react to the stress by a process called "fight or flight." This process

saves animals from threats in nature. But our pets live in our homes, not in the wild, and they need to see a veterinary team for regular healthcare. We know they don't need to flee or fight us, and we need their brain chemistry to support getting the care they need.

*Please give these medications exactly as directed by your veterinarian.* These medications are proven to be safe, but not every pet responds adequately to each medication. Your veterinary team may modify the dosing or medications based on how your pet responds. Finding the perfect recipe for each pet is a process, so be patient. Trust that we are committed to making the experience better for your pet.

## What else can I do to help?

There are all sorts of things you can do to make a trip to our hospital easier for your pet. Ask us for more strategies surrounding travel and arrival and even fun visits to our hospital to help create a pleasant association with the veterinary hospital.

Pets can learn not to fear something that previously caused anxiety—and medications can help. Don't be afraid to administer the medication to help your pet feel safe.

