

Hints for managing the stressed dog

Recognising stress



Yawning
Narrowing the eyes
Tucking the tail



Panting
Avoiding eye contact
Tense forehead and ears



Licking the lips or nose
Lowering or curving the body

These are a dog's way of asking to be left alone

Approaching the stressed dog



Try to avoid
Head on approach
Leaning over
Eye contact

Try to

- Allow the dog to settle before approaching
- Give the dog more time and space if you see signs of stress or fear.
- Use cues (e.g. sit, down) and rewards



Try to
Approach from the side
Crouch down
Reach under not over

Handling the stressed dog

Can the procedure be postponed?

Alternative options if examination isn't possible



Try to avoid
Noisy and busy areas
Use of force



- Trial therapy for likely diagnosis or suspected pain
- Prescribe short acting anxiolytics and re-schedule the appointment
- Muzzle training to allow less stressful handling
- Train the dog to be less fearful of examination and handling



Try to
Choose a quiet location
Use minimum restraint
Stay calm and relaxed

See www.apbc.org.uk/info/handling

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