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CVMA Emphasizes Importance of Minimizing Stress Response in Pets This Summer *Chicago Veterinary Medical Association provides tips for calming pets during storms, fireworks*

With summer in full swing, there are a variety of situations and noises that can evoke a worrisome stress response in pets. From thunderstorms to fireworks, which aren't only contained to Fourth of July celebrations, these stressful incidents can impact pets all summer long.

Fear of these summertime sounds and loud noises in general, can affect both dogs and cats, although dogs are more susceptible. This stress response in pets can manifest in a variety of ways including yawning, whining, panting, paw-licking, chewing, pacing, or hiding. Some pets also may become destructive and destroy things around the home in response to the situation.

"Dogs, in particular, have sensitive hearing and therefore tend to have a more extreme reaction to the stress of loud sounds," explained Dr. Marina Jaworsky, CVMA Board President. "If your pet shows overt stress-related symptoms during a thunderstorm or fireworks, there are some things you can do to help ease their discomfort."

Some ideas include:

- Providing a small, comforting, and safe place like a crate where pets can unwind and feel cozy.
Consider adding a blanket or their favorite toy
- Turning on soft, soothing music or a white noise machine
- Finding a toy that supports pets' licking and/or chewing stress response
- Outfitting your pet with an anxiety vest that provides comforting, soothing pressure

Oftentimes, simply speaking in a quiet manner and petting your dog or cat can go a long way to providing them with comfort during a stressful time.

For some pets whose anxiety is a significant issue, it is possible that medications can be prescribed. Owners should seek the advice of their veterinary professional to learn if this option is in the best interest of the health and wellbeing of their pet.

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About the Chicago Veterinary Medical Association: Chicago Veterinary Medical Association is a professional network with a longstanding tradition that connects more than 1,000 veterinarians with comprehensive resources that support their continued development as champions of animal health while encouraging the fostering of the human-animal bond.

About the Chicago Veterinary Medical Foundation: The CVMF, established in 2009, is a 501[©]3 charity that works with Chicagoland veterinarians to provide financial assistance to pet families in need by helping with the costs of their pet's urgent, unexpected medical and surgical bills. The Foundation's work plays a vital role in strengthening the human-animal bond by helping sick and suffering pets get well again.