



Wagging Tails

The Newsletter of Vegas Valley Dog Obedience Club

PAGE 1 VOLUME 50, ISSUE 10 OCTOBER, 2025

- EYEDROPS
SLOW VISION
LOSS
- DEHYDRATION
IN DOGS
- HALLOWEEN
SAFETY

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Do 'optimistic' versus 'pessimistic' medical detection dogs perform differently?

Date: April 10, 2025
Source: PLOS

Study uncovers links between detection suc- cess and dogs' affective and behavioral tenden- cies

A new, exploratory study has revealed statistical links between the performance of medical detection dogs and their scores on behavioral and affective tests, finding that more "optimistic" dogs tended to perform better overall on detection tasks, but "pessimistic" dogs had higher scent detection specificity. Sharyn Bistre Dabbah of the University of Bristol, U.K., and colleagues present

these findings in the open-access journal *PLOS One* on April 9, 2025.

Animal researchers commonly use a method called judgment bias testing to help assess animals' emotional states. For example, dogs may first be trained to associate a specific location in a room with treats, and a different location with no treats.

When presented with intermediate locations where a treat may or may not be present, the dogs' responses are assessed as a proxy for their emotional states. Dogs who tend to run quickly to intermediate locations in hopes of a treat may be considered to have a more "optimistic" emotional state.



However, prior research involving judgment bias testing has neglected medical detection dogs -- dogs that can use scent to detect disease or assist people with chronic health conditions, such as warning a diabetic patient of low blood sugar. Now, Bistre Dabbah and colleagues have analyzed statistical associations between judgment bias scores, behavioral assessment scores, and scores on medical detection tasks for 27 medical detection dogs and 39 detection dogs in training.

(See **DOGS** Page 3)

Fun Dog Facts

"Amazing Dog Facts & Trivia"
by Ryan O'Meara

1. Domestic dogs were depicted in prehistoric cave paintings. In Lascaux, France paintings date back 17,000 years. Spain dates its cave paintings 12,000 years ago.
2. Famed with fishermen as a lifesaver, the Newfoundland's webbed feet and oily coat allow it to remain in the water for long periods.
3. The Dandie Dinmont Terrier is the only dog breed to be named after a fictional character. It originally appeared in Sir Walter Scott's 1815 novel, *Guy Mannering*.
4. In some places people believe that a black dog brings bad luck.
5. The Scottish Terrier is the model for the dog playing piece in the board game Monopoly.

Contact Us



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We are on the Web!



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UPCOMING MEETINGS

MONTH	DATE
OCTOBER	7
NOVEMBER	4
DECEMBER	2
JANUARY	6
FEBRUARY	3
MARCH	3

Board Meeting begins 6:30pm

General Meeting begins 7:00pm

Attendance via Zoom is also available.

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 1600 E. Desert Inn Rd., Suite 240, Las Vegas NV

Upcoming Events Calendar

October 4-5, 2025 Chino Valley Canine Training Club of AZ Trials

October 11-12, 2025 Bakersfield Obedience Training Club Trials, California

October 24-26, 2025 Pahrump Valley Obedience Club Trials

November 14-16, 2025 Poodle Club of Las Vegas Show & Trials

January 1-4, 2026 Palm Springs Kennel Club Show & Trials, California

January 8, 2026 VVDOC Winter Class Registration

January 10, 2026 VVDOC Awards Dinner

January 15, 2026 VVDOC Winter Class session begins

January 17-18, 2026 Phoenix Field & Obedience Club Trials, Arizona

Jan. 29-Feb. 2, 2026 Heart of the Desert Classic Show & Trials, Arizona

February 6-8, 2026 VVDOC Trials

February 27-March 1, 2026 Superstition Kennel Club Show & Trials, Arizona

March 20, 2026 VVDOC Trials

March 21-22, 2026 Silver State Kennel Club Show & Trials

March 27, 2026 VVDOC Trials

March 27-29, 2026 Kern Co. KC & San Luis Obispo KC Show & Trials, California

March 28-29, 2026 SSKC Trials

April 2, 2026 VVDOC Spring Class Registration

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April 9, 2026 VVDOC Spring Class session begins

April 24-26, 2026 Apple Valley Kennel Club Show & Trials, California

Apr 30-May 3, 2026 Beehive Cluster Shows & Trials, Utah

May 1-3, 2026 Fiesta Dog Shows, Arizona

May 8-10, 2026 Del Sur KC, California

May 21-24, 2026 (4 Club Cluster) San Bernardino, California

June 11-14, 2026 Nut Farm Classic Show & Trials, California

July 2-6, 2026 AKC National Obedience & Rally Championships, Missouri

July 10-13, 2026 Truckee Meadows Dog Training Club Trials, Nevada

July 25-26, 2026 Flagstaff Kennel Club Show & Trials, Arizona

September 3, 2026 VVDOC Fall Training Class Registration

September 4-6, 2026 Red Canyons Kennel Club Show and Trials, Utah

September 10, 2026 VVDOC Fall Training Classes Begin

September 11-13, 2026 Great Salt Lake Kennel Club Show & Trials, Utah

September 19-20, 2026 Prescott AZ Kennel Club Show and Trials

(DOGS From Page 1)

The analysis showed that more "optimistic" dogs, older dogs, and dogs who scored higher on tests assessing confidence, food orientation, and playfulness tended to score higher on detection tasks. However, among the fully trained medical detection dogs, those who were more "pessimistic" achieved a higher degree of specificity in scent detection tasks.

This study does not establish any cause-effect relationships, and more research will be needed to further evaluate the findings. However, the researchers suggest that these relationships might indicate that differences in dogs' searching styles and performance in detection tasks could be influ-

enced by underlying differences in affective or cognitive processes. They note that, pending further research, judgment bias testing could hold promise as a screening tool for potential detection dogs.

The authors add:

"Our findings suggest that dogs displaying more 'optimistic' responses in a judgement bias test tend to demonstrate higher overall ability, as rated by their trainers. Understanding this link could help us to better train, select, and support successful medical detection dogs."

"Dogs that approached ambiguous cues more quickly -- indicative of 'optimism' -- were associated with higher levels of traits such as confidence and playfulness. These

insights could have important implications for training and selection methods in medical detection dogs."

"Working through the judgment bias test was particularly interesting, as it is a relatively simple and inexpensive methodology with the potential to provide valuable insights into dogs' personalities and decision-making processes. These findings could be relevant not only to the performance of working dogs but also to the welfare of companion dogs."

PLOS. "Do 'optimistic' versus 'pessimistic' medical detection dogs perform differently?" *ScienceDaily*. *ScienceDaily*, 10 April 2025. <www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2025/04/250409154619.htm>.

New eye drops slow vision loss in animals

Treatment shows potential to slow the progression of human degenerative eye diseases, including retinitis pigmentosa

Date: March 21, 2025

Source: NIH/National Eye Institute

Researchers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) have developed eye drops that extend vision in animal models of a group of inherited diseases that lead to progressive vision loss in humans, known as retinitis pigmentosa. The eye drops contain a small fragment derived from a protein made by the body and found in the eye, known as pigment epithelium-derived factor (PEDF). PEDF helps preserve cells in the eye's retina. A report on the study is published in *Communications Medicine*.

"While not a cure, this study shows that PEDF-based eye drops can slow progres-

sion of a variety of degenerative retinal diseases in animals, including various types of retinitis pigmentosa and dry age-related macular degeneration (AMD)," said Patricia Becerra, Ph.D., chief of NIH's Section on Protein Structure and Function at the National Eye Institute and senior author of the study. "Given these results, we're excited to begin trials of these eye drops in people."

All degenerative retinal diseases have cellular stress in common. While the source of the stress may vary -- dozens of mutations and gene variants have been linked to retinitis pigmentosa, AMD, and other disorders -- high levels of cellular stress cause retinal cells to gradually lose function and die. Progressive loss of photoreceptor cells leads to vision loss and eventually blindness.

Previous research from Becerra's lab re-

vealed that, in a mouse model, the natural protein PEDF can help retinal cells stave off the effects of cellular stress. However, the full PEDF protein is too large to pass through the outer eye tissues to reach the retina, and the complete protein has multiple functions in retinal tissue, making it impractical as a treatment. To optimize the molecule's ability to preserve retinal cells and to help the molecule reach the back of the eye, Becerra developed a series of short peptides derived from a region of PEDF that supports cell viability. These small peptides can move through eye tissues to bind with PEDF receptor proteins on the surface of the retina.

In this new study, led by first author Alexandra Bernardo-Colón, Becerra's team created two eye drop formulations, each containing a short peptide. The first peptide

(See **VISION LOSS** Page 4)



DID YOU KNOW?
October 1st is National Walk Your Dog Week



(VISION LOSS From Page 3)

candidate, called "17-mer," contains 17 amino acids found in the active region of PEDF. A second peptide, H105A, is similar but binds more strongly to the PEDF receptor. Peptides applied to mice as drops on the eye's surface were found in high concentration in the retina within 60 minutes, slowly decreasing over the next 24 to 48 hours. Neither peptide caused toxicity or other side effects.

When administered once daily to young mice with retinitis pigmentosa-like disease, H105A slowed photoreceptor degeneration and vision loss. To test the drops, the investigators used specially bred mice that lose their photoreceptors shortly after birth. Once cell loss begins, the majority of photoreceptors die in a week. When given peptide eye drops through that one-week period, mice retained up to 75% of photoreceptors and continued to have strong retinal responses to light, while those given a placebo had few remaining photoreceptors and little functional vision at the end of the week.

"For the first time, we show that eye drops containing these short peptides can pass into the eye and have a therapeutic effect on the retina," said Bernardo-Colón. "Animals given the H105A peptide have dramatically healthier-looking retinas, with no negative side effects."

A variety of gene-specific therapies are under development for many types of retinitis pigmentosa, which generally start in childhood and progress over many years. These PEDF-derived peptide eye drops could play a crucial role in preserving cells while waiting for these gene therapies to become clinically available.

To test whether photoreceptors preserved through the eye drop treatment are healthy enough for gene therapy to work, collaborators Valeria Marigo, Ph.D. and Andrea Bighinati, Ph.D., University of Modena, Italy, treated mice with gene therapy at the end of the week-long eye drop regimen. The gene therapy successfully preserved vision for at least an additional six months.

To see whether the eye drops could work in humans -- without actually testing in hu-

mans directly -- the researchers worked with Natalia Vergara, Ph.D., University of Colorado Anschutz, Aurora, to test the peptides in a human retinal tissue model of retinal degeneration. Grown in a dish from human cells, the retina-like tissues were exposed to chemicals that induced high levels of cellular stress. Without the peptides, the cells of the tissue model died quickly, but with the peptides, the retinal tissues remained viable. These human tissue data provide a key first step supporting human trials of the eye drops.

The research was funded by the NEI Intramural Research Program. Additional funding was provided by the Prevention of Blindness Society, Fondazione Telethon, HEAL-ITALIA Foundation, CellSight Development Fund, and Research to Prevent Blindness.

NIH/National Eye Institute. "New eye drops slow vision loss in animals." *ScienceDaily*. *ScienceDaily*, 21 March 2025. <www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2025/03/250321121311.htm>.

Height

13-15 inches (male)

12-14 inches (female)

Weight

15-18 pounds (male)

12-15 pounds (female)

Life Expectancy

12-15 years

For centuries Lundehunds were bred on Vaeroy, a remote and rocky island off the Norwegian coast. The Norwegian Lundehund is the only dog breed created for



About the Breed from the AKC

the job of puffin hunting.

Puffins nest in crevices in the island's cliff walls. Islanders depended on pickled puffin meat to sustain them through long Arctic winters, and the strong, flexible Lundehund was the only way to reach them. These compact puffin dogs would climb the sheer rock walls, worm their way into tiny passages, and snatch the birds. Then they'd skid down the cliffs, with the squawking, flapping prize in their mouth.

At a glance, Lundehunds seem a typical northern breed: A spitz type with triangular ears, curving tail, and a dense double coat. But a closer look reveals several unique traits. They have feet with at least six fully functioning toes and extra paw pads, an 'elastic neck' that can crane back so the head touches the spine, ears that fold shut, and flexible shoulders that allow forelegs to extend to the side, perpendicular to

Breed of the Month



Norwegian Lundehund

the body. This last anomaly produces the breed's distinctive 'rotary' gait.

With puffins now a protected species, today's Lundehund is a friendly, athletic companion.

The Lundehund is generally a healthy breed, and responsible breeders test their stock for health conditions such as patellar luxation and eye disorders. The Norwegian Lundehund has a low-maintenance double coat, with a harsh outer coat and a dense, soft undercoat.

Is Bordetella The Same As Kennel Cough

By **Dr. Jess Kirk, DVM**

Bordetella and kennel cough are terms that are often used interchangeably by pet owners, but are they really the same thing? The short answer is no. While Bordetella is one of the most common causes of kennel cough, it is just one of many potential culprits. In this article, we will delve into the differences between Bordetella and kennel cough, explore some interesting trends related to the topic, address common concerns, and hear from professionals in the field.

Bordetella, also known as Bordetella bronchiseptica, is a bacterium that can cause respiratory infections in dogs. Kennel cough, on the other hand, is a broad term used to describe a contagious respiratory disease in dogs that can be caused by a variety of pathogens, including Bordetella, canine parainfluenza virus, and canine adenovirus. The most common symptoms of kennel cough include a persistent cough, nasal discharge, and lethargy.

To shed some light on the topic, let's hear from a veterinarian specializing in infectious diseases: "Bordetella is just one of the many pathogens that can cause kennel cough in dogs. It is important for pet owners to understand that while Bordetella is a common culprit, there are other factors at play as well."

Interestingly, there has been a rise in cases of kennel cough in recent years, particularly in areas with a high density of dogs, such as boarding facilities and dog parks. This trend can be attributed to the highly contagious nature of the disease and the close proximity of dogs in these environments.

A veterinary epidemiologist weighs in on the trend: "We have seen a noticeable in-

crease in cases of kennel cough in recent years, especially in urban areas with a high concentration of dogs. It is crucial for pet owners to be vigilant about vaccinating their pets and practicing good hygiene to prevent the spread of the disease."

Another interesting trend related to Bordetella and kennel cough is the development of new vaccines and treatment options. Vaccination against Bordetella is a common practice for dogs that frequent high-risk environments, such as boarding facilities and grooming salons. In recent years, there have been advancements in vaccine technology that have led to the development of more effective and longer-lasting vaccines.

A veterinary immunologist comments on the advancements in vaccine technology: "We have made significant progress in the development of vaccines against Bordetella and other pathogens that cause kennel cough. These new vaccines offer better protection and longer-lasting immunity for dogs, which is a positive development for pet health."

Despite the availability of vaccines, some pet owners still have concerns about the safety and efficacy of Bordetella vaccines. Common concerns include potential side effects, the necessity of vaccination, and the duration of immunity provided by the vaccine.

Let's address some of these concerns with the help of a veterinary vaccine expert: "It is understandable that pet owners may have concerns about vaccinating their pets against Bordetella. However, the benefits of vaccination far outweigh the risks. Vaccination is the best way to protect your pet from kennel cough and prevent the spread of the disease in the community."

In addition to vaccination, there are other measures that pet owners can take to prevent kennel cough. Good hygiene practices, such as regular handwashing and disinfection of pet bowls and toys, can help reduce the risk of infection. Avoiding crowded dog parks and boarding facilities during peak flu seasons can also help minimize the risk of exposure to the disease.

A veterinary public health specialist emphasizes the importance of good hygiene practices in preventing kennel cough: "Simple measures like handwashing and disinfection can go a long way in preventing the spread of kennel cough. Pet owners should also be mindful of their pet's environment and avoid high-risk areas during flu seasons."

A veterinary emergency medicine specialist offers insight into the importance of prompt treatment for kennel cough: "Kennel cough can be a serious respiratory disease in some cases, especially in young puppies or immunocompromised dogs. It is crucial for pet owners to seek veterinary care promptly if their pet shows symptoms of kennel cough to prevent complications and ensure a speedy recovery."

In conclusion, while Bordetella is a common cause of kennel cough in dogs, it is not the only culprit. Kennel cough is a complex respiratory disease that can be caused by a variety of pathogens, making prevention and treatment challenging. By staying informed about the latest trends and advancements in veterinary medicine, pet owners can take proactive steps to protect their furry friends from kennel cough and other infectious diseases. Remember, prevention is always better than cure when it comes to keeping your pet healthy and happy.

<https://vetexplainspets.com/is-bordetella-the-same-as-kennel-cough/>

Warning Signs of Dehydration in Dogs

By Jan Reisen

Updated: Mar 26, 2024

Dehydration in dogs occurs when the body loses more fluid than it's taking in. All mammals rely on water to keep their bodies functioning properly, and dogs are no exception.

In fact, water is necessary for virtually every important body function, including lubricating joints, cushioning internal organs, aiding digestion, and regulating body temperature. When we think of nutrition, we generally think of food. But water is a critically necessary ingredient that allows the cells in your dog's body to absorb nutrients.

It is normal for a dog's body to gain and lose water throughout the day. Panting, breathing, urinating, defecating, and evaporation through the paws all contribute to normal water loss, which your dog compensates for by eating and drinking.

What Is Canine Dehydration?

When a dog's body gets to the point where normal fluid intake fails to make up for water loss, the blood flow and the volume of fluids are reduced. In turn, this reduces the delivery of oxygen to organs and tissue. Dehydration in dogs also results in a loss of electrolytes, such as sodium, chloride, and potassium. These minerals have important functions in the body:

- Balancing the body's pH
- Moving nutrients into cells
- Facilitating muscle function
- Regulating nerve function

In the most serious cases of canine dehydration, severe fluid shortage even lead to the failure of the kidneys and other organs.

Causes of Dehydration in Dogs

Lack of water intake can cause dehydration, which can occur if a dog doesn't have proper access to water or won't drink enough. Whether you're at home or you're



gone for part of the day, be sure to leave enough water so your dog will not run out.

Acute attacks of vomiting and diarrhea, heatstroke, or illnesses and fever may also cause a dog to become dehydrated. Puppies, senior dogs, nursing mothers, and toy dog breeds may have an increased risk of dehydration. Sometimes dehydration in dogs is a symptom of an underlying cause, including kidney disease, diabetes, or some types of cancer.

Some dogs just won't drink much water unless they are encouraged to do so. Or they may be exercising outside to the point where they are panting and therefore losing fluids. In those cases, make sure to encourage your dog to drink and ensure they're not exercising too much, especially in hot weather.

What Are the Symptoms of Canine Dehydration?

How can you tell if your dog is dehydrated? Unfortunately, our dogs can't tell us they're thirsty, but knowing the signs of dehydration can help dog owners respond quickly and also catch potentially serious medical conditions before they become emergencies.

According to Dr. Jerry Klein, Chief Veterinary Officer for the AKC and an expert in veterinary emergency and critical care, symptoms of canine dehydration include:

- Loss of skin elasticity
- Loss of appetite
- Vomiting (with or without diarrhea)
- Reduced energy levels and lethargy
- Panting

- Sunken, dry-looking eyes
- Dry nose
- Dry, sticky gums
- Thick saliva

Testing skin elasticity allows you to check for dehydration. Dr. Klein suggests that you gently hold some of the dog's skin near their shoulder blades, raise it up, and then let it go. Watch carefully as it falls back into place. In well-hydrated dogs, the skin instantly will spring back to its original position. The skin of dehydrated dogs, on the other hand, will take longer to fall back into place.

"It's a good idea to first test your dog's skin when you are sure he's well-hydrated so that you have a base for what normal skin elasticity feels like. This is especially important for owners of wrinkly breeds, such as Bulldogs or Neapolitan Mastiffs, because their skin may not be as elastic, even under normal conditions," says Dr. Klein.

Another test is to check your dog's gums to feel whether they're sticky and dry. While you're doing that, test for capillary refill time. Press your finger gently against your dog's gums and then remove your finger. In a well-hydrated dog, the area where you pressed will appear white for a second, and then return to its normal pink color almost immediately. In dehydrated dogs, the capillary refill time takes much longer.



Treating Canine Dehydration

If you suspect your pet is dehydrated, first (See **DEHYDRATION** Page 7)

(DEHYDRATION From Page 6)

make sure they drink plenty of fresh, cool water, especially in hot weather. In a vicious cycle, dehydrated dogs can lose their appetites, which causes them to eat less, and therefore eliminates the water content they would normally get from their food.

Your pet also may need to have their electrolytes replaced. When a body isn't getting enough water, fluids containing electrolytes are drawn out of the cells, causing an imbalance that affects the organs. If your dog is not vomiting, you can try giving them an electrolyte-enhanced fluid like Pedialyte. It's best to check with your veterinarian for dosage recommendations.

"If your dog has any of the symptoms of dehydration listed above, persistent vomiting, or you suspect heatstroke, take him to the vet immediately. This is considered a medical emergency," says Dr. Klein. "The vet can administer subcutaneous or intravenous fluids to most quickly replace the fluids that were lost and prevent further loss."

Since dehydration is often a symptom of a

larger problem, your veterinarian will want to diagnose and treat any underlying condition. This process will depend on your dog's other symptoms and could involve anything from blood work to X-rays or other tests.

How to Prevent Dehydration in Dogs

The best way to protect your dog from dehydration is to make sure they don't get in that condition in the first place. Provide them with a constant supply of clean, clear water at all times, including when you take them outside. Some dogs drink more than others, so you may need to take extra care to make sure that picky drinkers get enough water. Some dog owners try flavoring water with bone broth or giving their dogs ice cubes to chew on.

Depending on the weather and temperature, and the activity level and exercise of your dog, they may need more water on some days than others. As a general rule, dogs require at least one ounce of water per day for each pound of body weight. Your veterinarian can offer advice about

how best to ensure your dog consumes enough fluids, based on their age, weight, and condition.

We can't always prevent our dogs from getting sick, beyond keeping them up-to-date on their vaccines and providing them with a healthy diet, exercise, and regularly scheduled examinations by a veterinarian. Make sure to put away inedible items dogs like to chew, such as socks. To avoid them getting into your garbage, make sure the can's lid is closed. You can also buy dog-proof garbage cans.

Understanding the importance of providing our dogs with ready access to fresh water, as well as knowing the signs of dehydration, can help us keep our dogs safe.

This article is intended solely as general guidance, and does not constitute health or other professional advice. Individual situations and applicable laws vary by jurisdiction, and you are encouraged to obtain appropriate advice from qualified professionals in the applicable jurisdictions.

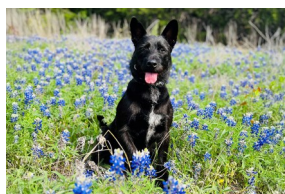
<https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/health/warning-signs-dehydration-dogs/>

AKC News

AKC Educational Webinar Series



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB



We are pleased to announce the return of the Public Education Programs & Resources webinars, hosted by AKC Public Education, on **October 7, 2025, at 5:30 PM (EST)** and **November 11, 2025, at 5:30 PM (EST)**.

These free, 60-minute sessions will highlight the wide range of educational programs and resources AKC offers to the public, from beginner obedience to advanced breeder tools. Each session includes a live Q&A, providing attendees with the opportunity to engage directly with AKC experts.

Past webinar topics have included:

- Getting Started: Obedience
- Long-Term Adverse Health Consequences Following Spaying/Neutering
- Brush Up on AKC Breeder Toolkit

Webinars are open to all, and registration is required. If you don't see a topic that interests you, we encourage you to submit your ideas to the AKC Education Department. Previous webinars are available on demand on the AKC website.

[Sign up and learn more about AKC Webinars here.](#)

Dogs and Halloween: Have Fun and Be Safe

Updated: 6/5/2025

By [Purina] Pet Expert Team



Halloween Costumes on Dogs

While it might be tempting to put on an extravagant costume for your pet, it is best to keep these costumes simple or off your dog if they do not like wearing them. A quick photo op for a costume is one thing if you take it off them right after, but if you plan to keep your buddy dressed up for the night, it might be better to do a simple Halloween bandana or fun collar. If they start showing signs of distress, then take the costume off them immediately.

Below are a few tips on costume safety for dogs:

Make sure you place the costume on your dog before Halloween to see how they will respond. Start as early as possible and perform short sessions with your dog wearing the costume while positively reinforcing them with [treats](#), toys, praise, and more. Slowly increase your dog's duration wearing the costume if they are not showing signs of distress. With enough time, you can make wearing a costume for a trick or treat trip a positive experience.

Beads, snaps, buttons, ribbons, elastic, fabric, and other detailed parts of a costume could easily be eaten by your dog and either become a choking hazard or lead to intestinal issues. Make sure you keep a close eye on them, so they do not eat these items off their costume or the costume itself.

A costume could result in overheating, impaired vision, and even difficulty breathing if it covers the face or is too restrictive around your pet's neck or chest. Masks, hats, and tight costumes should either be

Halloween Safety Tips

loosened or removed completely if they are affecting your dog's health.

- If your pet starts to exhibit signs of distress, such as folded down ears, eyes rolling back or looking sideways, a tucked tail, hunching over, pacing, hiding, or refusing to move, remove the costume immediately. This is your loved one telling you that something is not right with what they are wearing.

- If you do decide to pick them out a costume, choose an easy-on, easy-off outfit that does not constrict their head and neck and uses a lightweight fabric. You can also just do a simple Halloween bandana or collar as mentioned above.

- Always keep an eye on your pup while they are in costume in case any emergencies occur, such as overheating. This includes smaller costume items, such as bandanas which can get caught on various things, like an air vent.

Following these tips will ensure that you and your dog have a blast on Halloween night and that no costume mishaps occur.

Dogs and Halloween Candy

This is one of the biggest concerns on Halloween, since candy, such as chocolate, can be very toxic to dogs. Many candies and gums also have artificial sweeteners, such as xylitol, which can be fatal for your loved one. We must also take into consideration the high fat and sugar content in candy, which can lead to diabetes, pancreatitis, and more. Then there are other things to worry about, such as tin foil and cellophane candy wrappers that can be hazardous if your buddy swallows these.

Below is a list of Halloween foods that are bad for dogs. These treats can make your dog incredibly ill or worse:

- **Chocolate.** Chocolate contains methylxanthine compounds, theobromine, and caffeine, which can be fatal for dogs. The darker the chocolate, the more toxic it is for your dog.

- **Xylitol and other artificial sweeteners or "sugar-free" goodies.** A lot of candies and gums, especially the sugar-free kind, tend to have artificial sweeteners and xylitol. Xylitol is toxic to pets and can cause a host of health issues, including death.

- **Hard candies and gum.** Hard candies and gum can act as a choking hazard for our furry loved ones, and large quantities can clump up in their stomach and cause other obstructions as well.

- **Raisins.** Sometimes Halloween treat-givers will pass out raisins as a healthy choice for kids. While your children might enjoy this snack, grapes and raisins can be extremely dangerous for dogs. It can cause acute (sudden) kidney failure, as well as many other symptoms, including decreased appetite, lethargy, stomach issues, dehydration, and more.

- **Candy wrappers.** Candy wrappers can get lodged in your pet's throat or intestinal tract, requiring surgery to get them removed. Tin foil and cellophane wrappers can also create a lot of gastrointestinal irritation for your loved one due to the rough material.

If you would like to celebrate Halloween with your best friend, then it is better to get dog-formulated treats that have been specially made for them. Just remember that treats should make up no more than 10 percent of their daily caloric intake.

Furthermore, if you suspect your dog has eaten or drunk something toxic, then contact your vet, the local animal hospital, or the [Animal Poison Control Center](#) (APCC) at (888) 426-4435 immediately for assistance. The quicker you can get emergency aid, the greater you can minimize any damage that might occur thus saving your buddy from any life-threatening situations.

How to Keep Your Dog Calm on Halloween

(See **SAFETY TIPS** Page 9)

(SAFETY TIPS From Page 8)

Some dogs get overwhelmed with all the Halloween excitement. You might notice signs of distress, such as panting, hiding, excessive barking, pacing, going to the bathroom in the house, etc. If you see these types of symptoms, then here are some Halloween tips and tricks you can follow to keep your pup calm:

Try placing your dog in a crate if they enjoy their crate or quiet room to decrease the amount of stimulation they are experiencing.

Try a calming diffuser or calming supplement to keep their stress levels low.

If your dog tends to need extra soothing and comforting during storms or fireworks, you might have tried a calming wrap or other calming apparel to ease their distress. If you have these on hand, they can help significantly, especially on busy nights like Halloween.

Some forms of obedience training can help your dog with their anxiety levels. This is because certain forms of training can either create positive associations towards diverse stimuli and/or redirect their attention away from whatever is causing them stress.

- If your dog has a favorite chew toy that relaxes them, this would be a great night to let them play with it to keep them calm and stress-free.

If your dog is still showing signs of distress, it might be best to call your vet in case they can provide anxiety medications for your buddy or tell you if there is another underlying health issue.

Dog-Safe Halloween Activities

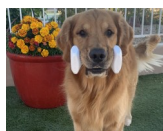
As much as we would love to take our dog trick or treating with us or show them off at a Halloween party, if you believe that your dog isn't enjoying the extra attention and festivities, then it is best to keep your loved one at home and away from too much commotion. The reason is because a frightened dog can easily bite someone or run away due to their fear of so many unknown people, scary decorations, frightening costumes, etc. They could even get out as the door swings open and closed all night long for trick or treaters. There are also potential dangers out and about on Halloween night, such as glow sticks that can be mistaken for chew toys, electrical cables that can give your dog a shock, small decorations that can become a choking hazard, etc.

These are a few reasons why most experts suggest it is best to keep your loved one indoors on Halloween night.

If you still want to celebrate this holiday with your dog, here are some better alternatives you can try:

- Watch a scary movie together.
- Spend time with your best friend playing with a Halloween-themed dog toy.
- Bake dog-friendly treats together or give them some pre-made dog treats that are specially formulated for them.
- Go to a dog park during the day to show off your dog's new Halloween-themed collar or bandana.
- Attend a dog-friendly, fall event together.
- Visit a dog-friendly, pumpkin patch while keeping a close eye on your buddy as you get closer to any pumpkins. That way they do not try to eat anything they are not supposed to.

<https://www.purina.com/articles/dog/behavior/play/halloween-safety-tips-for-dogs>



From the Editor

SMELL MY PAW
give me
SOMETHING
GOOD TO GNAW

TRICK OR TREAT

I ATE MY
COSTUME

Do you have a brag? Did you get a new puppy?
Do you have other dog-related news, photos, articles, humor, or upcoming events to share?
Do you have a canine product or service you'd like to promote?
Is there a subject you would like more information on?
Send your information to
Pam Chadwick at
Goldenz1@centurylink.net

Brags and Member Photos



At Flagstaff, Karen Barthen and Bebe won the Rally Excellent A Class with a 99 and finished her title.

Karen moved Bebe up to Masters for Sunday and she won again with another score of 99.

CONGRATULATIONS KAREN & BEBE!



At Red Canyons KC, Marti Siska and Daffy earned their first Utility A leg with a First Place.

CONGRATULATIONS MARTI & DAFFY!



Carol Riback wrote that at Red Canyons show Roo took High Combined all three days & got 12 points towards his OTCH2 title. Only have about 38 points to go.

CONGRATULATIONS CAROL & ROO!



Hallie's Tips

A special thanks to AKC Obedience and Rally Judge Hallie Ray, who has generously allowed us to reprint sections from her online blog. These are Hallie's opinions as a judge, not official AKC information. Hallie shared that she was her Club's newsletter editor (Richmond DOC) and they exchanged newsletters with VVDOC in the 1990s. Her blog may be found at <https://dracoshelties.wordpress.com/category/general/>

(See HALLIE'S TIPS Page 11)

(HALLIE'S TIPS From Page 10)

Don't Do Drugs

Dogs that are on a medication that changes behavior or gait, whether it's to reduce anxiety or prevent seizures or treat arthritis pain or anything else, may not compete in AKC events. The AKC Dog Show Rules govern Obedience and Rally, except where explicitly stated otherwise, and in Chapter 11 Section 8 it says (ALL CAPS are mine):

"A dog is considered changed in appearance by artificial means if it has been subjected to any type of procedure, substance or drugs that have the effect of obscuring, disguising or eliminating any congenital or hereditary abnormality or any undesirable characteristic, or that does anything to improve a dog's natural appearance, TEMPERAMENT, bite or GAIT.

*Even procedures, substances and drugs which are absolutely necessary to the health and comfort of a dog shall disqualify that dog from competition if the former had the incidental effect of **CHANGING OR EVEN IMPROVING** the dog's appearance, TEMPERAMENT, bite or GAIT.*

There may be cases in which a veterinarian has prescribed some drug as being necessary for the health of a dog. In such cases, the veterinarian's advice should be followed, but the dog should be withheld from competition in dog shows until all possible effects of the drug have worn off."

When people blatantly share online that their competition dog is on seizure meds or anxiety meds or arthritis meds or...I cringe. They are, whether they realize it or not, breaking the rules. If you read this blog you know I am all about the rules (though I'm not averse to pointing out when they are contradictory or downright silly). But I wish that, if people are going to break the rules and compete with a dog on meds that may alter gait or temperament, they wouldn't broadcast it to the world.

At one time—I don't know if it's still the case—many folks were using "Back Flower Rescue Remedy" on themselves, which is fine, and on their shy/anxious dogs, which isn't. Well, actually, since the stuff is homeopathic, it contains little of anything except possibly alcohol, but if an exhibitor is using it to alter appearance and behavior of cringing, shy, anxious or aggressive dogs, that stuff isn't allowed either.

OK, so now everyone is mad at me. Don't kill the messenger, those are the rules. It's fortunate for some exhibitors that AKC doesn't require drug testing of dogs in competitions... 'cuz there are a fair number that wouldn't pass. Just sayin'.

Draco Shelties August 6, 2025

ABOUT US



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Vegas Valley Dog Obedience Club was founded in 1962. We are licensed by the American Kennel Club. Our purpose is to promote responsible dog ownership, humane training methods, and to further the sport of canine Obedience through AKC Obedience & Rally Trials. We offer Training Classes to the public and our members three times each year.

Please contact info@vvdoc.org for more information about our organization.