

WHAT PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OCCUR IN PETS DURING WAR AND HOW TO TREAT THEM

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Every fifth animal that comes to the veterinarians has not physical, but psychological problems. How to help a four-legged dog cope with stress during shelling, what behavior can indicate a mental problem and what will help the animal calmly endure the evacuation? Stress in four-legged friends, like in humans, can occur very easily if you are constantly around an irritant. The cause of stress in animals can be sudden, for example, loud sounds or explosions. Symptoms of stress in animals are: constant licking, combing or biting of the fur. But skin diseases or parasites can cause such behavior as well. Shaved fur, increased sensitivity, i.e. the animal reacts painfully to touch, refusal to eat or, on the contrary, uncontrollable stress “eating”, fear of being alone at home, restless, anxious behavior, twitching or trembling of body parts, cats may start going to the toilet in other places, for example, on the owner’s bed are other characteristics of behavior for a pet.

What problems can arise from stress in pets? Cats develop physical illnesses as a result of stress. Veterinarians detect hemorrhagic cystitis, i.e. inflammation of the bladder, as a result of mental disorders. You can recognize this disease by observing the cat. If the animal is sick, it will strain during urination, and the urine may take on a pink color. If you notice these symptoms in your furry friend, you should immediately look for an opportunity to take him to the vet.

Also, stress can cause pulmonary edema in cats. It is also a dangerous disease for animals. If you do not take a sick cat to the vet in time, the furry one can die. “People were leaving Kharkiv, and when they came to Chernivtsi then they saw that the cat was suffocating. I immediately sent them to do an x-ray of the lungs, and indeed, the cat developed pulmonary edema due to stress,” Lydia gives an example from her experience. There are also general recommendations on how to help an animal during missile attacks. If possible, avoid walking during air raid alerts. If a siren suddenly appears or explosions are heard, talk to the dog in a calm voice, pat him confidently on the back, hug him – and quickly, but calmly, head to the shelter or home.

Veterinarians advise gradually accustoming animals to the sounds of sirens or explosions. For this, audio recordings that are included at the beginning with a minimum volume, gradually increasing it, are suitable. At the same time, it is necessary to distract the animal with games and entertainment, and then treat it. It is important to spend more time with your pet – to play, to provide comfort and a sense of security even in shelter – to have a favorite toy and a warm blanket with you with the smell of an animal. “If the stress was so strong that the animal refuses to eat, do not try to feed it by force. This can cause the opposite effect,” advises Mykola Chupryna, “it is better to wait until the animal calms down a little and shows interest in food.” The veterinarian also recommends having a supply of tasty food – wet food or pastes. If stress is predicted (you are going on a trip or temporarily returning to a place with intense shelling), you can give sedatives based on herbs during this period. “Preparations with plant extracts are not toxic and animals mostly do not have adverse reactions to them”. Despite this, pet owners are finding ways to keep their animals out of harm’s way and provide them with what they need during unforeseen situations.