



Most dogs are happy to get out of the house and go for a car ride. Others, not so much. If they don't normally go for car rides, then they probably know that as soon as they get in the car, they are going to the vet. Anxiety starts here.

Some things that you can do to reduce the stress before it starts:

Try a thundershirt. This essentially works like swaddling a baby, it works with light compression to create a calm feeling. They don't work for everyone, but for those that they do work for, it is like magic! Thundershirts can be purchased online through Amazon, Chewy.com and Thundershirt.com.

Pheromones are pretty great too. The dog pheromone, Adaptil, replicates the smell that a puppy gets from its mother. You and I cannot smell it, but dogs sure can. This product comes in a spray, a plug in diffuser (like a "Glade plug-in") and a collar. This also works for some dogs, but not all.

If your dog is treat motivated, and most are, try not feeding breakfast on the day of the vet appointment and bring their favorite treats. Food rewards go a long way!

Bring their favorite toy or bed or blanket, something familiar that they will feel comfortable with while they are here.

During the car ride, play soft music and don't baby talk your dog. They can sense the stress in your voice and in your actions, be calm.

Let us know ahead of time if you have a nervous dog or if your dog does not play well with others. We will be happy to schedule them at a time when they will be less likely to run into other pets.

Acclimation is great. Take the appropriate steps above, but then bring them into our lobby and just give them treats and lots of positive enforcement and then take them home without anything stressful ever happening here. We have many clients that live nearby and when they go for a walk, they stop by just to get a cookie!

One thing that we stress is not to give your pet a lot of treats or people food that they are not used to getting. It is not a good idea to add rich, fatty foods to your pets diet, even for a day, it can easily cause gastrointestinal upset and we don't want to make them sick trying to help them feel better.

Finally, let us know what works for you! We definitely want feedback if you are seeing improvement or a change. We make notes in your pet's medical record about handling, so we know what works best, as each dog is very different. We also like to pass on tips to other pet owners from those with experience!