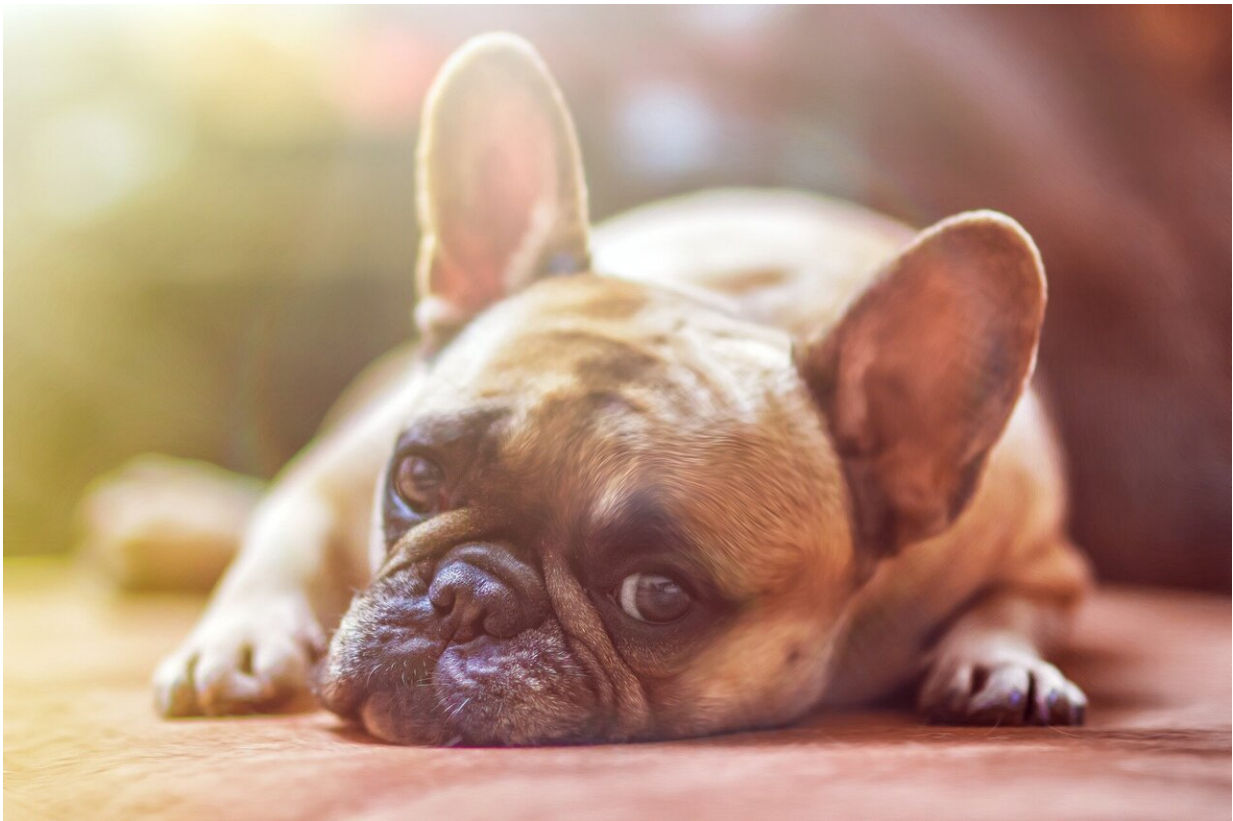


Anxieties and problematic behaviors may be common in pet dogs

March 5 2020



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Anxieties and behaviour problems may be common across dog breeds, according to a study published in *Scientific Reports*. The findings suggest that noise sensitivity is the most common anxiety trait, followed by fear.

Hannes Lohi and colleagues used an owner-reported survey to examine seven anxiety-like traits and problematic behaviours in 13,700 Finnish pet dogs and found that 72.5% showed problematic behaviours, including aggression and fearfulness. Noise sensitivity was the most common anxiety; 32% of dogs were fearful of at least one noise and 26% of dogs were afraid of fireworks, specifically. Fear was the second most common anxiety, found in 29% of dogs. This included [fear](#) of other dogs (17%), fear of strangers (15%) and fear of new situations (11%).

Noise sensitivity, and especially fear of thunder, increased with age, as did fear of heights and surfaces, such walking on metal grids or shiny floors. Younger dogs more often damaged or urinated on items when left alone, and were also more often inattentive, hyperactive or impulsive and chased their tails more than older dogs. Male dogs were more often aggressive and hyperactive/impulsive than female [dogs](#), which were more often fearful.

The authors also found differences between breeds. Lagotto Romano, Wheaten Terrier and mixed breeds were the most noise sensitive while Spanish Water Dogs, Shetland Dogs and mixed breeds were the most fearful. 10.6% of Miniature Schnauzers were aggressive towards strangers, compared to 0.4% of Labrador Retrievers.

The findings suggest that canine anxieties and behaviour problems may be common across breeds. Efforts should be made to decrease the prevalence of these conditions, for instance through breeding policies and changes to the living environment, according to the authors.

More information: Prevalence, comorbidity, and breed differences in canine anxiety in 13,700 Finnish pet dogs, *Scientific Reports* (2020).
[DOI: 10.1038/s41598-020-59837-z](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-020-59837-z)

Provided by Nature Publishing Group

Citation: Anxieties and problematic behaviors may be common in pet dogs (2020, March 5)
retrieved 8 August 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2020-03-anxieties-problematic-behaviors-common-pet.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.