



# De-Stress Companion Animals this Summer

Every summer our companions must deal with thunderstorms, fireworks, squealing kids, vacations and more.

I'm sure that you are frequently asked how clients can help their animals manage the stress and even feel calm during these challenging events.

There are powerful drugs available for the worst cases, but these have side-effects and can be risky. However, there are some wonderful, safe natural alternatives to explore before turning to drugs.

My favorite place to start is with flower remedies, such as Bach Rescue Remedy. ([www.rescueremedy.com](http://www.rescueremedy.com)) Rescue Remedy has been around since the 1930's because it works to calm and balance an individual in any stressful situation.

Rescue Remedy and its counterpart, Five Flower Essence ([www.fesflowers.com](http://www.fesflowers.com)), provide gentle, soothing relief in the midst of a crisis, injury, scary moment like a vet visit or vacation stress. They are not herbal medicines or chemical medicines, they are energetic medicines, created from the energy contained in flower blossoms.

Other flower remedies in the Bach and FES lines offer specific help for lonely animals while their families travel, aid on long car rides, help them tolerate visiting relatives (human and animal)

and more. For info on using specific remedies, see my book, *The Holistic Animal Handbook*.

Flower remedies are ideal for animals because you just add a few drops to food, water and petted on a nervous animal as you quietly reassure them. They can even be sprayed in the room, the car or in a carrier to help center a fearful animal. I keep a small bottle in my purse at all times!

Next there are herbal remedies that work to relax a stressed animal. These are often more effective than flower remedies for severe thunderstorm and fireworks fears. Here are two formulas I have seen calm the most terrified dogs.

- **Composure**, ([www.vetriscience.com/composure-liquid.php](http://www.vetriscience.com/composure-liquid.php))

This formula for dogs and cats comes in chewable form, a paste and a liquid. It has B vitamins, their "Colostrum Calming Complex" and L-Theanine, a component of green tea.

I had a client whose Aussie, Molly would hide in the bathroom shaking uncontrollably for hours before, during and after summer storms. Nothing made a difference for her until Composure. After receiving Composure, Molly

slept through the storm, waking up refreshed and happy again!

- **NutriCalm**, ([www.rxvitamins.com](http://www.rxvitamins.com))

This supplement comes in capsules and in liquid. This formula contains L-Tryptophan, Valerian Root, Kava Kava, Aswaganda, calcium, magnesium and the dog formula contains catnip. NutriCalm is available through vets.

Another client had a beautiful, white Shepherd named Star. Star would tear his way out of metal crates and even jumped through a plate-glass window to find his person during a storm. He would go out of his mind in panic. NutriCalm eased him enough that he was able to manage with just some panting and worrying. NutriCalm saved Star's life just as Composure saved Molly's.

Other extremely effective, non-medical tools include the **Tellington Touch**. ([www.ttouch.com](http://www.ttouch.com)) Linda Tellington-Jones created this wonderful modality decades ago and introduced body wrapping techniques for dogs and horses using a simple ace bandage. Wrapping an anxious dog calms the nervous system almost instantly allowing her to relax and cope with all types of agitating stimuli.

Building on the success of these techniques, entrepreneurial vet techs and vets created the **Thundershirt** ([www.thundershirt.com](http://www.thundershirt.com)) and **Pet Therapy Jackets** ([www.pettherapyjacket.com](http://www.pettherapyjacket.com)). These fabulous, fitted jackets provide the same comforting support the more complicated ace bandage wrap provides. The Warm Whiskers pet therapy jackets ([www.warmwhiskers.com](http://www.warmwhiskers.com)) are well-designed to deliver thermal cold or heat therapy as well. Older cats may enjoy the jacket with the buckwheat and lavender heat pack attached.

With even the most anxious dogs, I would use Rescue Remedy and a Thundershirt first as they will work together beautifully! The shirt can be used whenever a stress is present and can be easily taken off and on. Rescue Remedy can be given every 5-10 minutes if needed. Next I would give Composure or NutriCalm. I feel confident that almost every dog and cat will feel better and cope with all stressful situations with some combination of these safe modalities. ■

*Kate Solisti is an internationally known author and educator. She offers private sessions, teleconferences, her books and more at [www.akinsbipwithanimals.com](http://www.akinsbipwithanimals.com) She will be a speaker at the 2012 NAPPS Conference.*

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