



Submissive / Excitement Urination

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WHY does my dog leak when I reach to pet her? When I first get home? When meeting someone new?

Submissive urination is not a house training problem, it's a natural greeting behavior of a sensitive dog who lacks confidence. The good news is, they usually outgrow it. Age and life-experience are the real solution. In the mean time, we can minimize the frequency and size of the accident by minimizing the triggers.

What to do about "wet greetings"

Submissive urination/excitement urination is often seen in sensitive personality types and it will gradually subside with confidence building, socialization and by gradual desensitization.

Keep excitement and stress to a minimum.

When arriving home, family or guests should make no eye contact for at least 15 minutes. Only when your dog has calmed down, greet her quietly. Dogs feel less threatened and have an easier time controlling their excitement when guests don't make eye contact or try to make friends right away - after the adrenalin rush has subsided, wetting will be reduced or sometimes even eliminated.

Avoid leaning over or looking down.

This is really difficult with a small breed dog or puppy! Instruct guests to squat, turn sideways and scratch under her chin (not over her head or shoulders) to avoid accidental dominant body postures.

If wetting occurs, ignore it.

If you look disappointed or correct the dog, you will make matters worse - so avoid any negative reaction.

Socialize, socialize, socialize.

Leaky dogs need life experience. The more people they meet, the more sights and sounds they experience, the less traumatic and excited they become.

Don't coddle or correct.

Build confidence by concentrating on what the dog is doing right and ignoring any "mistakes." Keep your tone upbeat and confident. Your dog will feel much more confident when it's apparent that you are in control of the situation and act comfortable and relaxed. If you shriek, the dog will leak!

Set up for success.

Carry your puppy in social situations so when she does meet someone, the person is at eye level. Wear clothes you don't care about and bring a towel - be prepared! If your dog is too large to lift, step between your dog and oncoming visitors and instruct them to sit or squat and let the dog approach them in her own



time and on her own terms. This will eliminate the loom-factor. Give food treats to those who want to meet her. Direct them to turn sideways, give her space, let her sniff and if she welcomes their interaction, instruct them to scratch under the chin or the side of her shoulder and not over the top of her head.

If you have a pet behavior question or would like some training assistance,
San Diego Humane Society is here to help!
Visit our website at www.sdhumane.org to view our behavior and training options,
or call our **Behavior Helpline at 619-299-7012 ext. 2244** to speak with a trainer.