

# Dogs and the Fear of Thunderstorms

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Summer can be a stressful time for dogs. Many dogs become terrified during thunderstorms or even during fireworks or loud noises when a party or celebration is taking place. The two are not the same and both fears are not necessarily found in the same dog. One is a fear of sudden loud noises, while the other (thunderstorms) has an 'electrical' component. Most dogs that are fearful during fireworks are fearful during thunderstorms, but dogs that are afraid of thunderstorms are not always bothered by fireworks.

Kent's 'Repertory' lists several rubrics relating to thunderstorms:

Mind, fear during thunderstorms,  
Mind, during thunderstorms,  
Generalities, approach of a storm,  
Generalities, during a storm.

*Phosphorus* is listed in the second degree in the last three rubrics, and the highest degree (the only third degree listed) in the first rubric.

I have given *Phosphorus* from lowest to highest potencies, to dogs that are terrorized by thunderstorms, without any amelioration. Many of these dogs were *Phosphorus* type

animals and responded to the remedy in other ways. I have seen some dogs that, during thunderstorms, chew through metal cages, scratch and chew through doors, walls, and furniture, have diarrhoea and even have seizures.

These dogs responded well to *Aconite*. I prefer using a 200C potency, given once before the expected storm, and again at the start of the storm - repeating it if the dog becomes agitated. *Aconite* 30C will work, but in my experience, doesn't seem to calm them down quite as well.

Mathur, in his 'Systematic Materia Medica', says that *Aconite* is indicated for patients who are fearful, anxious, restless, and easily startled. There is anxiety with fear, anguish, complaints from fright, fear and even terror.

In some dogs, *Aconite* will remove the disposition to be afraid in thunderstorms, but not in all. It does, however, appear to be reliable for removing the acute fear, so is worthwhile to have on hand for fearful dogs. It is not listed in any of the repertory rubrics relating to thunderstorms, but should be. While it is not listed in 'Fear from noise', it is listed in the third degree under 'Sensitive to noise.' And it works well to remove the fear from fireworks as well.

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