



ALONE AT HOME PET SERVICES

“Humans would be better off if they tried to be more like dogs!”

July 2026

The Story of Finley, K9 Strokes and Finally Hope



CANINE STROKE FOUNDATION

*Bridging the gap between veterinary science
and caregiver understanding.*

With the right knowledge and intervention, 77% of dogs can recover from a stroke (aka brain attack or cerebrovascular accident, CVA).

Meet Finley and read his story from his owner, Jordan Davis which led her to found the Canine Stroke Foundation.

Finley was thirteen years old when it started. He had arthritis, managed anxiety, a benign liver mass, and minor hypothyroidism. By most measures, he was doing well.

August 17. He refused food that evening, something he had never done. The next morning, he couldn't walk without help. His eyes were flickering with a leftward fast phase (nystagmus), with his head tilted hard to the right. The vet diagnosed old dog vestibular syndrome and sent us home. No one took his blood pressure. No bloodwork was ordered.

Two days later, at home, the nystagmus had shifted to rotary, something the vet never saw. By August 24th, the eye movement had resolved. By September 8th, he was back to normal. I told myself we'd caught it early. **We hadn't caught anything.**

October 17. We'd had a full day at an outdoor event. When I went to load Finley into the car, he hesitated and paused before each step - something I filed away without understanding. Thirty minutes later at home, the nystagmus was back, but now in the opposite direction. His head tilted to the left. He couldn't stand. He vomited through the night and circled to the right.

October 24. When I offered Finley water, he turned away. His gums were pale. Every time someone lifted him, he went into lateral pressing to the left - rigid, unresponsive - with no nystagmus, and he snapped back immediately. Multiple episodes followed in rapid succession, each triggered **only** by being picked up. These were orthostatic transient ischemic attacks (TIAs), mini-strokes triggered by the change in position. A neurologist evaluated him. An MRI was not affordable. His blood pressure was within normal limits for a healthy dog, but elevated for one with a stroke history. No medication was prescribed. His last episode happened on **October 27th**, when a technician lifted him onto a gurney without warning. This was not vestibular syndrome.

By **December 23rd**, he was standing on his own and breaking into short runs. Ninety percent recovered.

January 2. He was fine that morning. I was loading him into the car for the drive to Nashville for physical therapy when he hesitated to walk. One hour later, when we arrived, he had deteriorated back to where we had started; vertical nystagmus in the right eye, overt, unmistakable, while the left eye barely moved at all and had dropped into a positional ventral strabismus (eye misalignment). The two eyes were doing entirely different things. Severe head tilt to the left, his rear left foot knuckling under him, his front left paw sliding out. Three strokes in less than five months.

Today. Finley is still in physical therapy. He cannot navigate stairs going down, but he wants to go up. He is bright and engaged. His anxiety, which had been a nine out of ten in daily life, is now a one or two. He is a happier, calmer dog!

I had a decade of veterinary experience and I could not find the information I needed! I had access to a neurologist and still could not afford the imaging required for a confirmed diagnosis. I pieced together a care plan from fragmented clinical literature, online forums, and phone calls that should not have been necessary.

NOTE: The minimum standard of care for any dog presenting with acute vestibular signs should include **blood pressure measurement** and a **senior blood panel**. These are low-cost, accessible steps that could identify the conditions most likely to cause a repeat event, and prevent the next dog owner from going through what I did.

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Disclaimer: This information does not constitute professional veterinary advice. Always work with your regular licensed vet for your dog, their medical history, overall condition, age and breed.

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How to Protect Your Dog During the July 4th Holiday!

Courtesy: Anya Juárez Tenorio/Pexels.com



4th of July Pet Safety



Create a pet-friendly quiet zone inside.



Enjoy a walk with your pet early in the morning before you celebrate.



Do not share food.



Fireworks can send pets running. Make sure their microchip and ID tags are up to date.

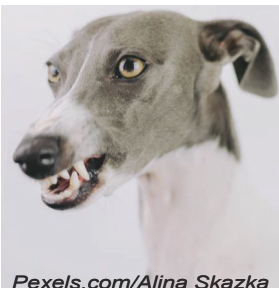
Courtesy: DoveLewis.org

K9 Body Language 101: Personal Space

Just like their humans, our pups need “personal space.” But do you know the **body language signs** to watch for when they are overstimulated or anxious in a new environment or around strange people to help them feel safe and secure?

Watch for the following **body language signals**:

- ♥ **Body:** Turning away from a perceived threat to present their back instead.
- ♥ **Ears:** Pinned to the head in an attempt to make themselves appear smaller or upright and forward, demonstrating the “fight or flight” response.
- ♥ **Eyes:** Alert and an often fixed stare; “the whale eyes” or averting direct eye contact.
- ♥ **Lips:** Tense and pulled back over teeth and licking often with yawning.



Pexels.com/Alina Skazka



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Certified Veterinary Technician & Certified Professional Pet Sitter



Rawhide vs Beef Hide

Do you have a dog that **LIVES** to chew?

While chewing is an excellent physical and mental exercise for our dogs, it's crucial to understand the difference between rawhide and beef hide.

Rawhide vs Beef Hide: The Facts

- » Rawhide is sourced from various livestock while beef hide is exclusively from cows.
- » Beef hide is often **marketed** as a “higher quality product” than processed generic rawhide and is considered more digestible and sourced from American cattle. **But these claims can be difficult for the average consumer to substantiate.**
- » While sourcing is critical, even more importantly, is the way these products are processed which may pose real risks to dogs.
 - » **Rawhide:** Processing the inner layer of the animal's skin into hard, long-lasting chews incorporates **bleach, formaldehyde, hydrogen peroxide, other toxic chemicals, preservatives, glue, synthetic flavors and colors.**
 - » **Beef Hide:** Often marketed as “natural” or “minimally processed” implies fewer chemicals and additives in production. **However, this isn't always the case for artificial flavors, colors and preservatives.**

Always do your research and read all labels to choose the safest chews for your precious dog! And, no matter what you choose to give your dog to chew, always supervise them when they are chewing!



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