

ALONE AT HOME PET SERVICES

"Be the person your dog thinks you are."

(C.J. Frick)

September 2025

Meet Your Dog's Vagus Nerve!

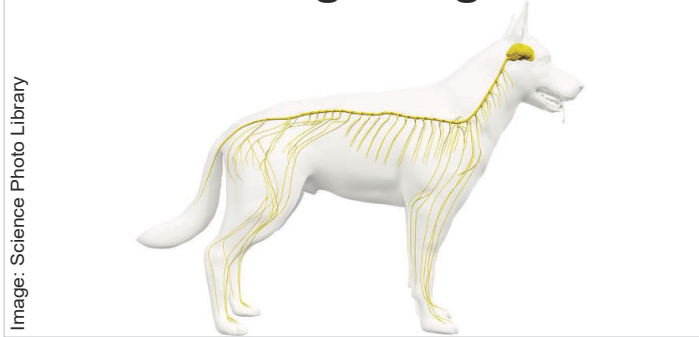


Image: Science Photo Library

Just like their humans, dogs also have a "vagus nerve," responsible for calming stress on their heart and other crucial organs. Keep reading to learn more.

What IS the Vagus Nerve?

The K9 vagus nerve is a major nerve in the dog's nervous system that extends from the brainstem down **both sides of the neck**, through the chest and into the abdomen. It is responsible for both the body's "rest and digest" functions and counteracting the "fight or flight" response.

In addition, the dog's vagus nerve is responsible:

- In regulating internal functions such as digestion, heart and respiratory rate.
- To constrict/dilate blood vessels for regulating blood pressure, heart rate and body temperature.
- For reflex actions including coughing, sneezing, swallowing and vomiting.

When this nerve is **imbalanced**, issues like reactivity, anxiety and other behaviors may be exhibited. In contrast, when the vagus nerve is **balanced**, the dog becomes calmer, more focused and relaxed.

Naturally Calming the K9 Vagus Nerve

The dog's vagus nerve can be stimulated and calmed with the natural methods below for their overall benefit and health.

- Gentle massage on the base of the skull, neck, ears, chest/back.
- Acupressure, acupuncture and chiropractic therapies.
- Essential oils like lavender.
- Using **Dog Appeasing Pheromone (DAP)**.
- Cold therapy (with a cold cloth) briefly applied to the chest area.

In addition, you can help support a dog's **balanced vagus nerve** by:

- Maintaining your dog's healthy gut with high-quality food and probiotics.
- Regular canine enrichment activities, sniffing, chewing and licking.
- Maintaining a calm and predictable environment and humans!

Always remember, every dog is different and **not** every method may work for **your** dog. If you're not sure what to do to support your dog's vagus nerve, **reach out for professional advice**.



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.

[Click Here to Visit AloneAtHomePetServices.com](https://www.aloneathomepetservices.com)

Email: TammyMcMahan@AloneAtHomePetServices.com or Call: 727-395-0051

Certified Veterinary Technician & Certified Professional Pet Sitter

Canine Enrichment for Your Dog

Teach Your Dog to "Talk" with these Buttons!



Image: Courtesy: Amazon.com

You've probably seen the videos all over social media of dogs "talking" with their humans. If you haven't, go check it out, we'll **stay** and **wait** right here! (YouTube's "WhatAboutBunny" is **our** favorite!)

So, how can you teach **your** dog (and cat) to communicate with you? Once you've purchased speaking dog buttons, record each button with a command such as **eat**, **play**, **walk**, and of course, **yes** and **no**. (Use the included stickers on each button for the recorded word.) The recordings can always be changed and the buttons are suitable for all dog breeds, sizes and ages (the buttons are very easy to press and activate). You can also add more buttons as your pet learns.

According to USA Today, Stella was one of the first "talking dogs" back in 2018. Her human, Christina Hunger, was a speech pathologist with nonverbal children. She began to wonder if she could help Stella "talk" by pairing words with her dog's common behaviors. Within the first year, Stella had learned almost 30 words! Soon, Christina began combining names, phrases ("love you") and emotions like "happy" and "mad."

Today, dogs communicating through these recorded buttons has become a global movement in **more than 47 countries!** A study by the University of California San Diego showed "dogs can comprehend specific words and produce contextually relevant responses."

Get started with your dog today and find out **what they have to say!**

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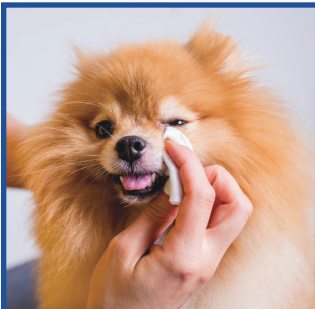
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HOW TO TREAT TEAR STAINS NATURALLY

No matter what solution you use to clean your pup's eyes, do not get it **into** their eyes to prevent injury!

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Use a pet-safe saline solution and cotton pads. Apply under each eye, gently rubbing. Use a new cotton pad for the other eye to prevent spreading any bacteria or infection.

You may need to clean the tear-stained area daily (or twice a day) to see positive results.

HOW TO HELP PREVENT TEAR STAINS

Keep your dog's hair trimmed short on the face.

Consider using probiotics.

Regularly clean and dry the eye areas, especially after your dog drinks water (since it splashes up around the eyes).

Improve your dog's grooming and consistency.

Try using distilled water for reduced iron content.

Use stainless steel bowls to avoid the buildup of bacteria in plastic bowls.

SEE YOUR VET WHEN:

Your dog suddenly develops tear stains when he's never had them.

The dog's eyes are red, inflamed, swollen, irritated or have yellow, green or thick discharge.

Your dog is squinting, pawing or rubbing at their eyes.

Cool Stuff for the Dog Lover THE Sniff-worthy Spots Hosted by Locals

Not every dog is a social butterfly! Some dogs are anxious, fearful or just unsocialable! But now, there's a new opportunity that caters to these picky canines, **Sniffspot!** Dog parents can rent **safe** and **private** areas for man's best friend; especially for those K9s who don't even like **seeing** or **hearing** another dog nearby.

If your dog likes to be the "king of his kingdom," Sniffspot has you covered for the **best** and **safest** experience!

Benefits include:

- ~ Distraction-free, private spaces you can reasonably rent by the hour.
- ~ Safe off-leash exploration with only the people and dog listed on the booking.
- ~ Safe playdates alone or with a furry friend they already know.
- ~ A safe alternative for smaller, sensitive or reactive dogs.
- ~ Options include local private dog parks, dog water parks, dog hiking trails, indoor dog parks, fully fenced dog parks, dog beaches, dog agility parks, dog swimming pools, small dog parks, private fenced backyards, fields or pastures.

Each listing includes descriptive information, photos, size, pricing **and** ratings so dog guardians can choose the **best** option for **their** pup with complete peace of mind before grabbing their dog's leash!

As described on their Facebook page, "Sniffspot is Airbnb for dog parks!"

Download the app today and find your perfect local spot!



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What's Behind a Dog's Tear Stains?

If you have a white or light-coated dog, you've probably noticed reddish-brown streaks or "tear staining." But it can also happen to darker-colored canines; it's just not as noticeable.

An iron-containing molecule called porphyrin (from the breakdown of red blood cells), is found in tears, saliva and urine of dogs. It can cause staining around the **eyes** or even **paws** from licking. These stains may be a warning sign that something is wrong inside your dog's body.

If your dog has regular tear staining, talk with your vet about your dog's overall health (including the eyes), as well as what they eat and drink, for potential causes like the ones below.

- ~ Blocked or shallow **tear ducts**.
- ~ Eye **infections**.
- ~ **Allergies**: environmental, food or grooming products.
- ~ **Eyelid** issues: inverted/everted eyelids as well as ingrown eyelashes.
- ~ **Facial conformation** may adversely affect the tear ducts, especially in short-nosed dogs.
- ~ Constant **moisture** can create yeast infections.
- ~ Artificial **additives, dyes** and **high iron** content in foods and water can exacerbate tearing.




Banana Honey Biscuits


Thanks to Dr. Karen Becker, here's an easy, 3-ingredient, guilt-free, nutritious **and** healthy dog treat recipe for Fido!

Just 3 Easy Ingredients:


- ~ 1 medium banana
- ~ 1/2 teaspoon raw honey, **local if possible**
- ~ 1/4 cup almond flour

 Preheat oven to 250 degrees Fahrenheit.

 Mash the banana in a bowl.

 Add honey and almond flour; stir to combine thoroughly.

 Drop tablespoonfuls of dough onto a greased or parchment-lined baking sheet or silicone baking mat.

 If desired, top cookies with sliced almonds. Bake for 60 minutes or until set. Cool completely before feeding.

