

Compulsive Behavior in Dogs

The causes and treatments of a dog's compulsive behavior.

CAUSES OF COMPULSIVE BEHAVIOR (fly-biting, tail-chasing, light-chasing, circling, etc.)

Miscellaneous: For many cases of compulsive behavior, the cause is unknown.

Congenital/Inherited disorders: Predisposition in certain breeds for some behaviors (flank-sucking in Doberman Pinschers, spinning in Bull Terriers, compulsive licking in large breeds).

Behavioral: Attention-seeking, at least initially.

Irritation/Inflammation: May precipitate licking, tail-chasing, or other actions, which eventually become compulsive behaviors.

What to do: Compulsive behavior is not an emergency, but your dog still needs veterinary and/or behavioral care. Call your veterinarian during regular office hours to make an appointment for diagnosis and treatment, which may include referral to an animal behaviorist.

Disclaimer: DogChannel.com's Dog Medical Conditions are intended for educational purposes only. They are not meant to replace the expertise and experience of a professional veterinarian. Do not use the information presented here to make decisions about your dog's ailment. If you notice changes in your dog's health or behavior, please take your pet to the nearest veterinarian or an emergency pet clinic as soon as possible.

Have a health question about your dog? Ask our vet expert or ask other dog owners on our forums.