

Dog Has Tremors After Trip to Groomer

A vet visit is in order for a dog who returned from a grooming visit with constant tremors.

By Kathy Salzberg, NCMG

Q. I recently took my Poodle to the groomer and when we came home I noticed that his legs were trembling a great deal. I don't know if the trembling had anything to do with the grooming or if I simply noticed it afterwards. It's been going on for almost a week and it seems to occur mostly when he is just lying down and relaxing. It happens out of nowhere. He is normally not a shaky or nervous dog, so I don't know what's going on.

What do you think the problem is? Could he be in pain? Is this worth the expense of seeing the vet?

A. Dogs can shake and shiver for as many reasons as humans do. They might be nervous, cold, bursting with anticipation, or having a really stimulating dream, but an underlying medical condition or an injury could also cause such tremors. Dogs with disc problems sometimes have leg tremors related to nerve damage while some shake because they are in pain, but it is usually accompanied by panting and acting listless.

Palsy, another cause of shaking, is common in older dogs who need to stand for extended periods. If your little guy exhibits this phenomenon while sleeping or relaxing and acts perfectly normal otherwise – eating, playing, and getting into mischief – then I don't think he is in pain. However, I still think it would be a good idea to have a complete physical exam done by your vet to make sure everything is normal.

Unfortunately accidents do sometimes happen at the grooming salon. Reputable groomers always inform their clients when such instances occur. In my family's salon, accidents have been extremely rare, but if one happened and it was our fault, we covered any related veterinary costs. Toy Poodles are among the most delicate little creatures on the planet. Groomers must always be aware of their special needs, and handle them with the utmost care.

However, before you blame the groomer, take your dog to the vet for a thorough exam to determine the underlying cause. In addition to spinal cord problems, tremors can be caused by such medical conditions such as kidney failure, low blood sugar, hypothyroidism, degenerative nerve disease, hip dysplasia, or tumors. Dogs who have ingested toxic substances sometimes exhibit tremors as well. Caught in their early stages, many conditions are treatable. For your pet's health and your own peace of mind, I think a vet visit would be well worth the expense.