

## Help Houstrain My Dog!

**Dog has accidents in the house because of family members' different schedules.**

*By September Morn*

**Q.** My 21/2-yr-old American Eskimo-Keeshond mix, Spartacus, is houstrained. When my 21-year-old son moved back home a month ago, Spartacus started having bowel movements in the house during the night. Someone told me it could be because my son and I work at different times, and that Spartacus sleeps when I do, then wakes up when my son goes to work two hours later and thinks it's time to go to the bathroom.

Spartacus always goes in the exact same spot in the living room when he messes at night. Nothing else in his routine has changed. Is there anything I can do to stop this?

**A.** Whoever suggested that reason for Spartacus' nighttime bowel movements is probably right on target. Many dogs need to move their bowels shortly after waking from a night's sleep. Before your son rejoined your household, Spartacus was used to sleeping through the night without interruption, but now he's waking when he hears your son moving around, getting ready for work. Eskies and Keeshonds are both alert breeds and can hear even the quietest sounds. It's not that your son's being overly noisy; any tiny sound he makes will probably wake Spartacus. And when your dog wakes, he soon feels the need to eliminate.

It's possible that, over time, Spartacus will get used to your son's nightly activity and will stop getting up when he hears him. But in the meantime, here are two options to prevent those midnight messes.

1. Tether or crate Spartacus in your bedroom, so he can't slip away and poop while you're asleep. He may still need to eliminate, but he won't be able to go to his chosen soiling spot in the living room. He won't want to poop while confined by the tether or crate, so he'll probably fuss enough to wake you up. Then you can take him outside to eliminate.
2. Have your son take Spartacus outside to do his business before he leaves for work.