

Dog Urinating Everywhere

Older dogs sometimes develop incontinence problems. Phenylpropanolamine can help.

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Q. I have a 14-year-old female Toy Poodle/Yorkshire Terrier mix. She is practically blind and deaf at this point, and is urinating wherever and whenever. Aside from these problems, her health is excellent (from her last veterinary visit). I bought baby diapers for her, but when I forget to put one on, she urinates on the rug, floor, etc. She also will go outside and urinate. I have read that medicine could possibly help, but I don't know if I want to put her on medicine at this point. Is there anything else that you would suggest for her? Thank you.

A. Yes, things do start to go wrong when dogs get to be 14. I may be able to help you with the urination problem, at least. Spayed female dogs often develop a problem with urinary incontinence as they get older. Because their estrogen levels are low, they lose control of the muscular sphincter that controls urination.

Phenylpropanolamine is a medication that is very effective in improving the function of the urinary sphincter. Unfortunately, it was pulled off the market several years ago after it was found to cause heart problems in people. (It used to be found in an over-the-counter diet supplement). Fortunately, phenylpropanolamine (also called PPA) does not have cardiac side effects in dogs.

It is now available by prescription from veterinarians, and is formulated solely for the veterinary market. It's given once a day, or every other day, as needed to control incontinence. Please talk to your veterinarian about starting your dog on PPA.

Best, Jon Geller, DVM

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