

Play Fetch With Nervous Labrador Retriever

Breed-specific exercise will help with dog's nervous behavior.

By Jon Geller, DVM

Q. My 3-year-old yellow Labrador Retriever drives us nuts. She paces and snaps her teeth together, wants outside, then stands there and stares at us through the glass door. Next she begins tapping the glass with her nail wanting in. What's up? I'm not new to this breed, and have never seen this behavior before.

A. There is no shortage of crazy-acting, neurotic Labs out there, and many of them seem to be yellow. My Lab mix Raindog also snaps her teeth as a message that she wants to go out and play.

I think the issue is this: Your dog is a retriever, she wants to retrieve, and she needs you to throw something for her to retrieve. Unless you are planning on taking her bird hunting, it may be a tennis ball that she needs to retrieve. When she taps on the glass with her nails, she is saying, "Come out and play with me. I need someone to throw a ball."

Some researchers say that dogs are one of the most effective methods of getting Americans off the couch and outside exercising. You will thank your crazy Lab later.