

## Treating Obsessive-Compulsive Behavior in Dogs

**A dog can be treated for obsessive-compulsive behavior with the same medications as a human.**

*By Jon Geller, DVM*

Q. My Brussels Griffon licks her nose obsessively. At first, my wife and I thought it was just a cute thing she did, but now it's becoming annoying. There seems to be no reason for what she is doing. When she sits down and makes herself comfortable, she begins licking her nose nonstop. What is causing this, and how can we get her to stop?

A. Some dogs can demonstrate obsessive-compulsive behavior. Before we call it that, you should have your dog examined by a veterinarian to make sure there is no condition with her nose that might cause her to lick it.

The treatment for obsessive-compulsive disorders usually consists of a combination of behavioral therapy and some of the same psychogenic drugs that humans use, such as amytriptyline. Because these medications are fairly powerful and can have some negative side effects, I would avoid using them unless you truly feel this is a significant problem. If her licking is doing no harm, perhaps you could ignore it.