

## Teach Your Dog Not to Lick

### **Build self-esteem in a persistent licking dog.**

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Q. At 8 months of age, our Norwich Terrier started licking people. She licks incessantly whenever she is close to anybody guests included. How can we eliminate this behavior?

A. Licking begins as an act of submission, which is instinctive behavior for self-preservation. Puppies lick their mothers' mouths to elicit food, and all canines use this method of communication to show submission to alpha dogs. Pets often transfer this display of humility and deference to their owners. At that stage, licking should be curbed before it turns into an obsession.

You can apply a foul-tasting deterrent product to the back of your hand or arm and give a firm command, such "No lick!" as the dog licks. Ordinary obedience training will improve the dog's self-esteem, negating her need to be submissive and giving you verbal control over her actions. Encourage better use of her mouth by offering a toy when she complies with your correction.