

REMEMBER, REMEMBER THE 5TH OF NOVEMBER

November is that time of year when we celebrate the Hindu festival of Diwali and Guy Fawkes Night, with spectacular fireworks displays and bonfires.

However, an estimated 60 per cent of all animals become distressed during this time because of the loud noise and light from the fireworks, which can lead to injuries or even injuries, distress and long term behavioural problems.

Small animals such as dogs and cats can be more easily protected by keeping them in the house and making sure they have the company of their owners to calm them and provide reassurance. However, horses can be just as terrified by fireworks and so it is equally important to ensure they are kept out of harm's way.

To help prevent your pet from injury or even developing long term behavioural problems we have teamed up with Petplan Equine's Vet of the Year, Gill Riley to give you some top tips:

- Do your research in advance ascertain where and when fireworks parties are being held by neighbours
- Don't leave your horse in a field next to where a display or a bonfire is going to take place
- Try to keep your horse in a stable. If your horse is upset by the noise, try shutting the top door
- Try to be with your horse to settle him or her if you know that they are nervous of fireworks
- Don't tie your horse up even if you are with him or her. A sudden noise could make your horse pull back suddenly, leading to injury
- Give your horse plenty of hay to keep it occupied
- Sometimes leaving the radio on in the stables helps to keep a horse calm
- Keep to your normal routine – keeping your horse to his usual routine will help minimise stress.
- If you know that your horse is nervous of fireworks, seek veterinary advice. It maybe appropriate to prescribe a sedative paste.

Not all horses are affected by fireworks but if you're not sure whether your dog is stressed by fireworks, his symptoms may include some or all of the following:

- Temperature
- Respiration rate
- Salivating and drooling
- Trembling and shaking
- Eagerness to get into/out a room or stable
- Scrabbling into corners
- Whining
- Look out for their ears going back and the whites of their eyes
- Bolting
- Trying to hide
- Loss of bodily functions - bladder and/or bowel
- Refusal to eat

If you are unsure of your pets behaviour or if you know your pet is stressed by fireworks, please seek veterinary advice well before fireworks season.