

Stop Your Puppy's Excited Peeing Or Submissive Urination

Speaker Key

SG Susan Garrett

Transcript

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SG Puppies pee for one of three reasons. Occasionally they might have a bladder infection. It's rare, but it does happen. Number two is their bladder is full and they just need to relieve themselves. And number three, your puppy might be peeing because they're overly excited or a little bit afraid, and they actually don't even realize they are peeing.

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And that is the topic of today's podcast, overly excited or submissive urination sometimes called submissive elimination. Hi, I'm Susan Garrett. Welcome to Shaped by Dog. And if you are watching this on YouTube, you may notice something about me right now. I'm actually wearing a party hat. And that is because by the time this podcast gets published, we will be at, or we will have surpassed a pretty big milestone for us. 30,000 subscribers. So, *singing* let's have a little party for 30. Now, if you are one of our 30,000 subscribers, please celebrate with me. Thank you for being here. Thank you for being part of the community.

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And as part of the celebration, I invite you to invite at least one of your friends to come and join our party. Ask them to subscribe to the podcast. Best way to do it, take your favorite podcast episode and send it over and say, "Hey, you should subscribe. The lady's a little wacky, a little bit kooky, a little bit crazy, but she knows her dog training." If you are not a subscriber, hey, welcome to the party.

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Go ahead, click the subscribe button now. And there's a little bell, a notification bell. You hit that and like an angel gets their wings. No really, seriously. When you hit the notification bell, YouTube will let you know when we put out a new podcast. So welcome. And thank you guys. I truly take that as a vote of confidence. Every time I see that we have a new subscriber, I go, we're changing the world and that's what I'm all about here. So welcome. Now the decision is, do I keep wearing the party hat? You know what, I guess I should just own it, right? Let's just roll with it.

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Okay. The most important thing you need to know about submissive urination or excitement urination is that it is an emotion. It's an emotion the puppy doesn't even know they're doing it. All right. So, it's different than a house breaking, if you want to call it, house training problem. It's different than teaching a puppy not to potty in the house. That's different than party, that's potty. We want to [teach a dog to potty outside](#).

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And so, when they have accidents in the house, that's a training issue because it's a conscious thought. The puppy goes, "Oh yeah. I feel like I got to pee. Ah what would it be a good spot? Yeah. Check out that t-shirt on the floor in the bedroom. I think that would be perfect place for me just to relieve all that's right here in my belly." So, it's a conscious thought unlike when a puppy gets excited or they're a little bit afraid and they submissively eliminate.



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Now a lot of that comes down to whether they're overly excited or a little bit afraid or overly afraid it's a lack of confidence. And I've said this many times on the podcast, our role as, you know the guardian of this puppy, number one rule is to protect and grow that puppy's confidence. And that is an easy way to correct, fix, overcome, puppies that tend to squirt when they greet. And in the end of this podcast, I'm going to share with you two different approaches. One I call the quick and easy and the other is the more empowering and enriching.

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Now the really cool thing is you can start the quick and easy and move on to the empowering and enriching. They both work but who wouldn't want quick and easy, right? So, I'm going to go over both of those at the end of the podcast. But first just think about anytime that you're afraid. If you go back to [podcast episode number 103](#), I share in there a story that happened when I was a teenager. I think I was about 15. And I was walking with my friends, and you know, long story short we were chased by a man. And when I noticed he was chasing us I ran and screamed and completely emptied my bladder all at the same time. I don't mean, 'oh, I had a little tinkle'. I mean the wet spot went all the way down my thighs to my knees. So, you couldn't tell me, "Oh Susan, don't pee. Someone's chasing you, but don't pee."

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That was a reflex. It was just a bodily function that happened when I was scared. Now does that mean everybody that gets chased by somebody will immediately eliminate, will immediately pee their pants? Well, I think there's probably one or two Navy seals that would it be put in the same situation that probably wouldn't pee-pee in their pants, right? Okay. I'm guessing there wouldn't be a single Navy seal that would have pee-peed in their pants.

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And what's the difference between 15-year-old Susan being chased by somebody and peeing all over the place and a Navy seal being thoughtful and quick-witted in a time when they might be a little bit afraid. The difference is confidence in that environment. The difference is experiences, and [the difference is the triggers](#). What happens to that Navy seal when they're put in a place of danger, they don't fold up and scream and flail and run, and I really couldn't even run that well.

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Okay. So, I just want to tell you that story to remind you as much as it could be tough for you, you've got to remember you know, while the puppy is saying hello and squirting all over the place. They don't know they're doing it. So please do not get upset with that puppy. Remember it is a confidence issue. Okay. Let's talk about what contributes to this happening. Obviously, there are some breeds of dogs that are more likely to happen. I find with my Border Collies, female Border Collies, they often tend to submissive eliminate. Not all of them.

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I find sheep herding ones more so than cattle herding ones. Again, generalities. There's a lot of different breeds of dogs. And then within every breed there'll be different dogs. The bottom line is, is when you see it, go "Oh yeah. Susan talked about that on her podcast. Let's jump in and fix it." Okay. Contributing factors. Number one, puppy is small people are big. So of course, immediately there's going to be an intimidation factor. And that's why it's called submissive urination.



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Because the puppy is showing that they are submitting to you. "Oh, great grand poobah. You are so big." And so, a lot of times when they're tinkling, they might even roll over on their back and show you, their belly. So, number one contributing factor is the difference in size. Number two is the sound. So, a gruff voice may make a dog, or a puppy submissively eliminate. Also, a loud voice or a high voice. So, a high voice might get that puppy super excited where they might eliminate. So neutral tones, always the best.

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Direct eye contact. So, eye contact is so powerful to dogs. And so, when you stare directly at a puppy, that might be enough to put them off. Now, the second thing along with that is if you stare at that puppy and you don't speak. Now you're big and scary and I'm not even sure if you're friend or foe. So that would be enough to really trigger fear in you know, the hardest of puppies. The height of the person has a big factor.

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I remember my brother when we were young, I had a young Border Collie who was really submissive and submissive peed until she was a year old. Had I known then what I know now, that would have been all fixed. My brother had a friend who was about 6'7 and it didn't matter and he just adored Stoni. But she wouldn't go near him because he was just too tall like you know, people shouldn't be that tall.

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Yeah. I'm 5'3 so it might be hard for a puppy that is seeing somebody 6'7 to digest that. So, height is a big factor. And a lot of times with that height comes, people looming over the puppy. Like they kind of go over top or they reach over top. So, all of those things are intimidating to a puppy. And also contributing would be the newness of a stranger. There is a lot more likely to be fear. Or if it's somebody they know but they haven't seen for a long time, it might likely to trigger a lot of excitement. So, all of those things contribute. And the final thing is forcing a puppy to do something like you reach into their crate and you try to pull them out.

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So, a lot of times that might create a situation where a puppy would submissively pee, especially if they have to go pee. Right. [Crate Games](#) to the rescue on that one, but that's a spoiler alert. So, forcing a puppy to do something when they're not ready, particularly where they don't know what's the unknown on the other side of that.

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All right. So those are the things that might contribute to that puppy being afraid or over-excited. So how do we fix it? First of all, before I jump into the quick fix, I'm going to go over seven ways that you can be prepared. Number one, your mindset. Remember I said this is an emotional response from the puppy. They can't control it. So, you have to see pee-pee on the floor and go, "Oh buddy. Yeah, we can do better. It's all on me." Do not go "Oh...", do not show disappointment. Do not show frustration. Do not show anger. And you know what? I understand. If you've been dealing with this puppy for a year who's been squirting everywhere it could be a little frustration.



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But your emotions might be contributing to them because they're already being submissive, and they can tell that you're getting a little bit upset so that will make them more submissive. So, you've got to go to your happy place and just go like "Poop happens right?" In this case, pee happens. And it's going to be okay. So, your mindset plays a big role.

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Number two, be prepared. Have a bin with some washable rags that you can do a quick cleanup. Also, I like a cleaner that doesn't have heavy fragrance. I don't like using fragrance, both for my own health and for my dog's health. So, something like [Nature's Miracle](#), which is a digesting enzyme to not mask a smell but really digest the urine so that it doesn't smell. I've been using that product. I don't know 20, 30 years. If they're listening, they should you know, give me a "Hey Susan. You're awesome." Okay. So, your mindset is important, being prepared so that it isn't an inconvenience for you. "Yeah, yeah, yeah, just wipe this up, throw that in the wash. I'll move on." All right.

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Number three, you've got to practice uneventful arrivals and departure. I know you've heard this before and it's just so tough because we love our puppies, "All our puppies are so cute!" But you've just got to get into the habit of not going goofy, crazy when you get home or when you see your puppy. Just rehearse coming in, talking in a neutral voice, "Hey, how's it going?" If your puppy is in a crate, you know, obviously let them out of the crate "Hey bud." And you're talking at them without talking to them. Okay. So going along with that would be you're not going to make direct eye contact with your puppy.

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Talking in a normal tone and look, pretend there's a shadow. Pretend there's a big light shining on your puppy and you're talking to your puppy's shadow. So, you're looking, you know, maybe I don't know that far away from the puppy so that you're really not creating any kind of intimidation whatsoever. So, you want to talk in a neutral voice if you are going to, you know, I don't like to acknowledge it. I can't, I admit I can't come in the house and not say anything. I'll just say, "Yeah. Hey bud, how's it going?" as I go and you know, look at the wall or whatever. Especially if you have to get that puppy out of the crate, because they have to go wee. Get them out, clip the leash on, get them outside. And once they're eliminating outside, then you can talk to them.

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Okay. The seventh thing we need to do is change our puppy's focus. This my friend is going to be all the difference in the world to getting a puppy to not submissively urinate when somebody greets them at the door. All right. First off, I'm going to share with you the quick and easy way to fix this. At your front door you will have a little box with some favorite toys that your puppy loves and/or a little food dish with some cookies in it. And what we want to do is when anybody walks through the door, you're going to change the puppy's focus.

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So, either have whoever walks through the door grab a toy throw it in a neutral corner meaning it's not behind you so the puppy has to go by you and is not towards the puppy, so they don't really have to think much. It's neutral. It's away from you and the puppy. So, the puppy has to actually break the thought of greeting you and go, "Oh, my favorite toy. I love my toy." So, dogs that love tennis balls or puppies love tennis balls, that's a good thing.



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And you know, they can greet you or greet the new guest maybe in three or four minutes, five minutes, 10 minutes, whenever they had a little play with that toy. And then the excitement level has come way down. Cookies are another thing if puppies don't innately go crazy over their toy, walk through the door and have your guests walk through the door, grab a handful of cookies, say the word "search", throw them in the neutral corner.

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And the puppy then stops being focused on, "Oh my gosh! Someone new! Someone new! Someone new!" she'd go, "Oh, I love my cookies!" and they just start snuffling the cookies. So, we're changing the focus. So that's the quick and easy way to overcome this. Now, many puppies are going to outgrow this before their first birthday.

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Now the ones that don't a lot of times is because it's been mishandled that the owners have got emotional, and they've made the puppy more worried about it. So, they may outgrow it within a year anyway, but if you do the quick and easy thing, 'changing the focus', your puppy will outgrow it a lot faster.

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Now let's move into the next stage, which is empowering the puppy. And what we want to do is grow that puppy's confidence because if they're fearful or overexcited chances are they're not confident puppies and how could they be? They are puppies. All right. So, we want to grow that puppy's confidence with games of choice.

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So, you're going to teach five things. [ItsYerChoice](#), [Hand Targets](#), Hot Zone, Crate Games, and the cue "Search". You can find [four of those five things over on my YouTube channel](#). By the way, there is a [puppy playlist](#) on that YouTube channel that's got over 30 amazing puppy teaching videos. So, if you've got a new puppy, head over and check out that playlist. And in that you will find a lot of the videos that I just spoke about. Once you've taught those five games or as you're teaching those five games you are growing confidence and you're giving the puppy choice.

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So, we're not going to be dragging the puppy out of the crate where they are forced to be put into a position they're not comfortable with. We're giving them the power to release on the word "break". That immediately changes the relationship with you and the puppy. They become far less intimidated by you because they know they have free choice around you. So, you're going to play those five games.

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Now, what we need to do is create a new trigger. Right now, the trigger is 'I see people and I start groveling'. 'I see new people, I start groveling'. 'People talk loud to me or gruff to me or loom over me and I get worried'. So, we need to change that trigger. And you're going to start the same way the quick and easy does. So right away, you're going to start the quick and easy. But the other thing I would like you to do is I'd like you to create a poster. And we've done this before on [episode number 109](#), we created a poster to put on the front door so that people wouldn't greet our dogs when they were barking.



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Now we're going to [create a poster](#). You can put in a little picture of your puppy on the front, that would be cute. And you know, don't overwhelm your guests with a lot of rules. You're just going to say you know, 'please help me raise my confident puppy.' And number one, 'come in and talk to me. Don't look at the puppy.'

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Number two, 'grab a handful of cookies, say the word "search" and throw them into a corner away from my puppy. Not at my puppy.' That's all they have to do. So, we want to empower people coming through the door, but we want to prepare them with a little poster. So, we start with our dogs, just seeing somebody come through the door and getting their favorite toy or their favorite cookie. Then we're going to move up on this one.

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Now, one thing you can do is you're going to have a greeting chair at the front door. If you got like really tall people coming in, they sit on the chair, immediately their size is a lot smaller and it's less intimidating to the dog. And what they can do is as they're sitting in the chair, you can you know, you can tell them before they come in, just put your hand out to the side low where the puppy can touch it.

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The puppy has a history of touching hand to nose with you. They see the hand they touch, throw cookie in the corner. You have now taken the change of focus up a notch because the puppy goes, "Oh, I work for you too? I work for you, and I can earn things." Confidence growing around. New people in the environment.

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So, we've gone from just the trigger is the door open, somebody comes through the door and good things happen get thrown into corners to now you hand touch and good things get thrown in the corner. The next progression is to tell the dog or the puppy to "hop it up" and they go on their Hot Zone. So, they're in their hot zone and you can toss them cookies. The person can come in and the person might even ignore them for three to five minutes. Or you can just tell them break and go visit the person can then do some hand touching. And what we're doing is we're rehearsing really good behaviors for your puppy.

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But the secret ninja to this empowering stage is like I mentioned in [episode number 121](#), I want you to practice the re-greet. So, this is what it looks like. If you have a family member you can do this with this is great. If not, invite a friend over. If that isn't at all possible teach your puppy Crate Games and then you go through the door, release them from the crate, have them greet you and then tell them to go back in their crate and you go out the door.

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I want the puppy for the next three or four days to rehearse greeting people they know, so that we're building in triggers of confidence with people they know. And then when people they don't know come through the door, it's already rehearsed and here's what you're going to do. Somebody new comes through the door, they would have read the poster.



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You would have said you know, whatever stage you're at, throw cookies in the corner or put your hand down and get the puppy to touch your hand, or I'll tell my puppy to hop it up and then she'll come in and touch your hand. And once that's established, the puppies had a couple of cookies, that person leaves the house and comes back in for the re-greet.

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If you can get some friends over, over the course of the weekend to do this, and know even if you get a little dribble, you're still gonna throw cookies in the corner. You're still going to do the hand touch. Even if the puppy is giving you a little tinkle. Eventually when you are doing this re-greet over and over guess what, the puppy is going to grow in confidence. And that my friend is what is going to build in with so much strengths, the new trigger, so that the puppy is confident. And voilà! you no longer have a puppy who excitedly tinkles or submissively urinates.

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I'll see you next time right here on Shaped by Dog. I may or may not be wearing a party hat at that time. I'm not a hundred percent sure. Depends how we go. We get to 40,000 new subscribers. I might be wearing two party hats.

Resources:

[Podcast Episode 48: Potty Train Your Puppy in a Week \(Easy 3 Step Process\)](#)

[Podcast Episode 103: Excited Or Suspicious Dog? Dealing With Your Dog's Emotions](#)

[Podcast Episode 112: Stressed Dog? How Trigger Stacking Might Be Putting Your Dog Over Threshold](#)

[Get Crate Games Online](#)

[Podcast Episode 109: Project Calm Dog: Prevent Over Enthusiastic Greetings](#)

[Learn to Play ItsYerChoice \(IYC\)](#)

[Podcast Episode 68: 3 Easy Tricks Every Dog Should Know](#)

[YouTube Video: 5 Games for Puppies](#)

[YouTube Playlist: Puppy Training with Susan Garrett](#)

[PDF Download: Project Calm Dog Poster](#)

[Podcast Episode 121: How To Stop Dogs Jumping Up On People](#)

[Nature's Miracle Stain Remover Eliminator](#)



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About Susan

A world-leading educator of dog trainers, Susan is also one of the most successful agility competitors of the last three decades. She has won multiple Gold Medals at National or World Championship events with every dog she has ever owned over the past 30 years. Susan was one of the very first dog trainers to share knowledge online when she opened her "Clicker Dogs" website many years ago. Susan has helped hundreds of thousands of people enjoy a great relationship with their dogs through her workshops and keynote speaking around the world, award winning books, DVDs, magazine articles, blog posts, podcasts, free dog training and dog agility video series, and online dog training programs.



A natural teacher and an entertaining speaker, Susan is world renowned for her dog training knowledge and practical application of that knowledge. Her understanding of how to apply science-based learning principles to both competitive and family pet dog training has been pivotal in changing how dogs are trained.

Susan is now helping many thousands of dog owners in 82 countries have the best relationship possible with their dogs. The real joy for her comes from bringing confidence to dogs and their owner through playful interactions and relationship building games that are grounded firmly in the science of how animals learn.



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