Common Signs of Anxiety or Fear in Dogs and Cats

Anxious or fearful pets may exhibit one or more of these signs.

### Dogs

**Vocalization:**
- Excessive barking
- Whining
- Growling

**Body Language/Posture:**
- Ears lowered or flattened, or highly erect ears
- Avoiding eye contact or staring
- Tight lips/grimace
- Tucked tail
- Hiding or cowering
- Trembling
- Lifting one front paw
- Hyperactivity
- Freezing or refusal to move
- Aggression—biting, nipping, snapping
- Leaning on or clinging to owner
- Jumping or startling easily
- Disinterested in play activities

**Other signs:**
- Yawning
- Hypersalivation
- Panting (not related to exercise)
- Inappropriate elimination
- Hypervigilance
- Failing to follow basic commands that have been learned
- Lack of interest in food/treats or snatching treats

### Cats

**Vocalization:**
- Hissing
- Growling

**Body Language/Posture:**
- Dilated pupils
- Flattened ears
- Hiding or cowering
- Nails extended
- Crouching low
- Trembling
- Passive escape behaviors
- Fleeting
- Piloerection (hair standing on end)
- Excessive self-grooming, scratching, or licking
- Inappropriate elimination
- Diarrhea
- Inter-cat aggression
- Loss of appetite

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**Photo Credit:** Dr. Theresa DePorter

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