

## Tips for vet's and vet office staff to bring up separation related issues to clients

Separation disorders can be overwhelming for pet parents. Here are a few easy tips to approach the conversation.

- 1▶ Start the Conversation.** Many pet parents do not feel comfortable bringing up behavior concerns. Asking if there are any upcoming or recent changes in the household routine can be all it takes to get your clients talking. **AAHA's Behavior Guidelines from 2015** recommend a behavioral assessment at every appointment. There are also short questionnaires available that can screen for behavior problems when your team collects the pet's history.
- 2▶ Stop and Listen.** It can be tough to slow down when you have back-to-back appointments. But stopping and taking just 1 to 2 minutes to really listen to the client's concerns makes them feel heard.
- 3▶ Schedule an Appointment.** Feel free to schedule a separate appointment to discuss the behavior concern. Separation disorders can be overwhelming for pet parents and you will need more than 2-3 minutes to cover things.
- 4▶ Keep a List of Resources.** Keep various resources to share with pet parents to get the conversation started. There is a lot of misinformation out there, and you want to direct your clients toward the good resources.

