

Abnormal Repetitive Behaviors in Dogs and Cats: A Guide for Practitioners

Valarie V. Tynes, DVM^{a,*}, Leslie Sinn, DVM, CPDT-KA^{b,c}

KEYWORDS

- Repetitive behaviors • OCD • Obsessions • Compulsive disorders • Stereotypies
- Frustration • Conflict • Self-injurious

KEY POINTS

- Stereotypies and compulsive/impulsive disorders represent 2 different forms of repetitive behaviors. Although they share similarities and possibly overlapping neurophysiology, they are not the same thing.
- Stereotypy and compulsive disorder (CD) are not diagnoses to be made carelessly; too little is currently known about their underlying pathophysiology, and no clear diagnostic criteria exist.
- Many medical conditions can result in or contribute to repetitive disorders, so treatment of concurrent or underlying conditions are a critical part of the overall treatment plan.
- Abnormal repetitive behaviors (ARBs) that are not caused by medical conditions, pain, paresthesia, or dysesthesia are likely a result of anxiety due to feelings of conflict or frustration.
- Complete resolution of an ARB is uncommon, but a variety of treatments, both pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic, may be used to decrease the frequency of the behavior and thus improve the quality of life for the patient.

INTRODUCTION

The ARBs represent a highly heterogeneous group of behaviors the neurobiology of which is poorly understood. These behaviors have been observed in a large variety of captive wild and domestic species, are commonly associated with certain husbandry practices, and are generally believed to be reflective of poor welfare. The ARBs have historically been referred to as stereotypies, obsessive-compulsive disorders (OCDs), and compulsive disorders (CDs) by various investigators. Although the veterinary literature regularly uses the term stereotypies and obsessive-compulsive or compulsive disorders interchangeably, evidence continues to grow that these are 2 distinctly different, yet complexly related, behaviors, about which there is much to

^a Premier Veterinary Behavior Consulting, PO Box 1413, Sweetwater, TX 79556, USA;

^b Northern Virginia Community College, Veterinary Technology Program, 21200 Campus Drive, Sterling, VA, 20164, USA; ^c Behavior Solutions, PO Box 116, Hamilton, VA 20159, USA

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: pigvet@hughes.net

learn. Prematurely attempting to assign these different labels to companion animal behavior problems may have led to confusion in our thinking.¹ In addition, the careless application of labels may prevent prompt and appropriate treatment of animals afflicted with these behaviors. **Box 1** lists some useful definitions of the current terminology. For the purpose of this article, the term abnormal repetitive behaviors is used to include all the aforementioned behaviors. Although the use of the term abnormal

Box 1

Some useful definitions

Perseveration

The inappropriate repetition of behaviors elicited in an experimental or diagnostic context. There are 3 recognized forms of perseveration, and they each reflect brain dysfunction at a different level of executive processing.

Stereotypic behaviors

A descriptive term referring to any behavior that is repetitive or stereotypic in form and whose mechanism is either not known or not of concern. Some stereotypic behaviors are normal, such as grooming sequences or ritualized courtship behaviors.

Stereotypies

The repetitive, unvarying behavior patterns with no apparent goal or function, commonly displayed by captive animals.¹⁵

Frustration

Occurs when an individual is motivated to perform particular behavior but is somehow prevented from doing so.

Conflict

Occurs when an individual is motivated to perform 2 opposing behaviors at the same time.

Displacement behaviors

Normal behaviors shown at an inappropriate time or out of context for the situation. Grooming behaviors are commonly seen as displacement behaviors in a variety of species.

Redirected Behaviors

Behaviors that are redirected away from the target stimulus and toward a different target that did not trigger the original behavior. Many animals redirect aggression toward a more convenient target when they are prevented from reaching the target that triggered their aggressive response.

Vacuum activities

The performance of a behavior in the absence of the normal substrate required for the performance of the behavior. One example is vacuum chewing in sows, where they perform the motor patterns associated with chewing in the absence of any food.

Obsessive-compulsive disorders

OCDs are characterized by obsessions, recurrent thoughts, urges or images, and compulsions, the repetitive mental acts or behaviors that an individual feels driven to perform in response to the obsessions.

Obsessive-compulsive spectrum disorders

This term is used to cover conditions that are included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, under OCDs but recognized to have important differences and similarities. Examples include conditions such as trichotillomania and pathologic gambling, conditions that are also often referred to as impulse control disorders.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/2460242>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/2460242>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)