

# Five Tips to Utilize Fear Free in the ER



1

**Understand that dogs and cats in the ER setting are experiencing fear, anxiety, stress, and possibly pain, as opposed to being unruly or mean**

- o Know the difference between neutral and stressed body language.
- o Call out body language to fellow staff to give information and formulate a plan in handling for procedures.

2

**Reduce FAS by keeping all four paws on the floor/table**

- o Have a non-slip mat available for pet to stand on.
- o Provides balance for pets, which helps them feel more secure.

3

**Use gentle control when handling cats and dogs**

- o Once touching patients, slide hands to parts of body instead of lifting hands and touching patients repeatedly.
- o Offer towels for cats to hide under.
- o Take a break and reassess handling plan if FAS is 4-5.

4

**How to reduce FAS when giving treatment/doing procedures**

- o Limit the number of staff members that interact with patients.
- o Block view of other patients for the cat or dog you are treating.
- o Use lidocaine for needles, especially blood draws and IV catheters.

5

**Limit smells, sights, sounds, and touch**

- o Use Rescue to clean in between patients.
- o Separate dogs and cats and do as much in the exam room as possible.
- o Quiet voices, and softly open and close doors and cages.
- o Once touching a patient, slide hands into place to avoid repeatedly touching them.

