

Reverse Sneezing

Does a dog you know occasionally make a funny snorting sound? Did you ever hear someone mention that their dog does a reverse sneeze?

Reverse sneezing is a relatively common phenomenon in dogs that fortunately is usually not serious but can be alarming if it's not a familiar trait of your pet.

Reverse sneezing is typically caused by an irritation to the area called the nasopharynx where the nasal passages meet the back of the throat. Just like a regular sneeze which is the body's attempt to expel an irritation in the nasal passages, the reverse sneeze is the body's attempt to expel an irritation in the nasopharynx. Since the nasopharynx is at the back of the nose, the sneeze is reversed.

A reverse sneeze often sounds like the dog is snorting, sucking air in through their nose to expel the irritant as opposed to blowing it out like a normal sneeze.

Just like a regular sneeze, a reverse sneeze is a normal function and is most often not a serious problem. If it is persistent, causing distress or the pet is having difficulty breathing, then it is more serious and should be evaluated.

This usually means that the underlying cause or irritant is not able to be expelled and may need to be treated or removed.

