

The Bio-Sensor Method for the Early Neurological Stimulation of Puppies Or Bomb Proofing Your Puppies

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The notion that there are critical stages for the development of puppies and infants is certainly not news. Nor is the fact that there are certain ways that we can enrich environments and experiences to provide the conditions which will maximize development and learning. Clarence Pfaffenberger in the [New Knowledge of Dog Behaviour](#) long ago identified the specific stages of puppy development and identified early interventions appropriate to those periods. This article seeks to address only one group of interventions available to us for a very brief window in time, commonly referred to as Early Neurological Stimulation, or the Bio Sensor Method.

It is commonly believed that the US military observed the behaviour of enemy dogs under very extreme combat conditions during the Second World War and were impressed by their resilience and perseverance. After the fall of the Nazi regime, the story goes that documents outlining a process of early neurological stimulation of these combat dogs were found. The US military adopted some of these strategies into their own project, often referred to as the "Super Dog Program". Whether or not this sequence of events actually ever occurred, the Military did proceed with the Bio-Sensor program and many proponents argue in favour of its beneficial effects.

Stress has a significant impact not only on behaviour but on the very physiological make up. A great deal of research continues to be done on the impact of stress on cardiovascular disease, the immune system, cancer, coping behaviours and other mental health outcomes. While there is general consensus that stress plays a significant role, there is little evidence to support any notion of just how much stress is beneficial and at what point it becomes harmful with deleterious effects to health and well being. Dr. Carmen Battaglia, in his article [Developing High Achievers](#), is careful to point out that while Early Neurological Stimulation has measurable benefits, it must be used with caution, as too much stress can cause pathological adversities in the very puppies we are trying to develop to their maximum potential.

The following sequence of exercises was designed to stimulate the neurological system of puppies from the third day of life, until the sixteenth day. This specific period has been identified as a time of greatest neurological developments and offers the most precise window of opportunity for breeders to have significant impact. The exercises are completed from the beginning to the end of the sequence for each puppy in the litter. It is important to mention again, that these exercises should only be done once per day, and not repeated more frequently. More is NOT better!! Puppies should be handled and played with in the usual manner at other times as these exercises are not a replacement for routine handling and play.

The Exercises



Tactile Stimulation

The handler gently tickles the puppy between the toes of any one foot using a Q-tip for 3-5 seconds.

Head Upright

The puppy is held in an upright position with both hands so that the head is directly above the tail for 3-5 seconds.



Upside Down

The puppy is held firmly in both hands with head pointed towards the ground for 3-5 seconds.



Supine

The puppy is held on its back, nestled in the palms of both hands. The face is pointing towards the ceiling and the puppy may either struggle or sleep for 3-5 seconds.

(Cold) Thermal Stimulation

The puppy is placed feet down on a cooled (in the fridge for min. of 5 minutes), damp towel. The puppy is not restrained and may move at will. 3-5 seconds.



Dr Battaglia reports the following benefits of Bio Sensor stimulation in his article:

- Improved cardio vascular performance (heart rate)
- Stronger heart beats
- Stronger adrenal glands
- More tolerance to stress
- Greater resistance to disease.

These exercises only provide one piece of an intricate puzzle, consisting of genetics, early stimulation, imprinting, conditioning, socialization and enrichment which will contribute to the development of a healthy, well adjusted adult Bernese Mountain Dog. These exercises are not any kind of magic fix or stand alone solution, but only some of the many tools available to us as breeders and puppy owners.

For more information:

<http://www.breedingbetterdogs.com/achiever.html>

<http://www.gonetothedogs.com>