

Puppy Love

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Sweet Dreams

Research has clearly indicated that dogs do dream in the very same way that humans dream. This is really not all that surprising because we are 95% identical genetically and physically to dogs. Our brains are similar, our neurochemistry is the same, our reflexes and memory are “wired” in the same manner.

Like humans, dogs have two main types of sleep: rapid eye movement (REM) sleep and slow wave sleep (SWS). As a dog falls asleep he enters the SWS stage of sleep and becomes oblivious to his surroundings. His breathing slows, his blood pressure and body temperature drop, his heart rate decreases. In this stage of sleep dogs, and humans, appear to be calm and at rest.

By contrast, in REM sleep brain waves are rapid and irregular. During REM sleep dogs, like people, show evidence of heightened mental activity. It has been observed that dogs can: move their legs like they are running, whine or whimper as if excited, and breathe rapidly or hold their breath for short periods of time.

REM sleep is when dog and human are at their most relaxed state. Most dogs usually spends 10-12% of their sleeping time in the REM stage of sleep. Puppies spend a greater portion of their sleeping time in REM sleep, no doubt compacting huge quantities of newly acquired data.

Belle dreaming at home with her new family in Charleston, SC.



How About That: Dr. Stanley Coren, a professor at the University of British Columbia and neuropsychological researcher, has conducted extensive research on dog behavior. He has published numerous books on the topic of dog behavior & human relationships. It is his conclusion that small dogs dream more than big dogs and that a small dog's typical dream lasts ten minutes.

