

## **Building Comfort with Car Rides:**

For loading into the car and building positive associations with being there, start to incorporate using his motivation at meal times to help increase his comfort with loading into the vehicle. The idea is that he loads into the car and then receives his meal inside the car while it is simply parked. The idea is to associate jumping into and settling in the car with very positive things!

When hanging out and "doing nothing" in the car, you can also use food puzzles like a [Lickimat](#), a [stuffed Toppl](#) or long-lasting edible chew projects to help him settle and just hang out. His willingness to settle in to chew or eat means he is relaxing. Specifically, using longer lasting high value food the dog has to lick and chew at is beneficial because repetitive licking is a calming/ soothing behavior for dogs that releases serotonin, the "feel good" hormone.

For the "do nothing" car exercises, stay out long enough to the point where Aiden relaxes enough to just "hang out" and is willing to lick or chew at the high value food or chew item. Try to do these "hang out" sessions during less busy times of day where there is not constant traffic, people, and dogs coming and going, and ideally *after* Aiden has had plenty of physical and mental exercise.

In case some of his reluctance to load into the car has to do with him feeling a bit car sick and nauseous, I do strongly encourage having a conversation with your vet and seeing if they might be able to just prescribe some anti-nausea medication. The goal would be to use this for the next few weeks as you work to make loading in the car very positive for him, then lean away from having to use the anti-nausea medication for each car ride.