

THE HOT DAYS OF SUMMER AND YOUR PETS' HEALTH



During the hot days of summer the weather can present unique dangers to your pets. One of the most common dangers is leaving your pet in a warm car even with the windows rolled down slightly. Another major danger is having your animals be over active in hot, humid weather!

Due to the fact that pets are unable to sweat like humans they can overheat quickly. Did you know that cats and dogs rely primarily upon panting to get rid of hot air and to inhale cooler air to cool their bodies? Dog and cats also sweat a little through the pads on their feet and their noses.... but that is not to cool themselves down. As a result, they are prone to heatstroke and that is very dangerous. As an example, even when it is only 65 degrees outside, a car can quickly become a dangerous environment for our pets as the inside of a car is often 10 to 20 degrees warmer inside.

According to veterinarians heatstroke is a **real and major** medical emergency and a life threatening condition that should require **immediate** medical attention!

So how do you know whether your pet is experiencing heatstroke? Here are some **SIGNS** to look for:

- Excessive drooling or vomiting
- Dark red gums
- Excessive panting
- Signs of tiredness or weakness
- Unresponsiveness to normal commands/calls
- Rapid heart beat
- High fever
- Collapse
- Warm/dry skin and nose

It is extremely important if your pet has these symptoms that you get them to a veterinarian quickly as heatstroke can lead to permanent damage to the heart, liver, brain and other internal organs.

What should YOU know and what can YOU do to help protect your pets!

If your pet is outside on hot days (either on a walk, playing or working) make sure that they have access to a shady area, a lot of cool/cold water and they have an opportunity to rest.

Also realize that all breeds of dogs or cats are not alike. Short nosed breeds like Pekingese, Bulldogs/Boxers and Pugs in dogs and Persians in cats are especially prone to heatstroke.

Older animals and animals that are overweight are also more susceptible to heatstroke, as are animals with respiratory problems.

Also be sure not to leave your pet encaged or chained up in an area where there is no shade or ample cool water.

If your pet is indoors it is also important to give them access to cool areas and lots of water. Keep an air conditioner or fan on if possible. People also need to be careful in leaving their pets in a garage as there is often a lack of air movement/flow that is critical to your pets' breathing.

If you suspect heatstroke!!!!

If you suspect that your pet is experiencing heatstroke...get them to a veterinarian immediately. While you are traveling to the veterinarian's office you should wrap your pet in **cool** towels in an effort to lower their body temperature. **Do not** use ice water as this may be too much of a shock to your pet's overheated body. If possible place a fan in front of your pet's face or fan cool air towards them to improve the air flow in your car/truck.

