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Summer is a time for vacations, barbecues, parties, swimming, and outdoor fun. However, it's important to remember several safety measures when bringing your pets along for summer activities. Whether swimming at the beach or keeping your pets cool in hot temperatures, here are some tips to keep your pets safe during the summer and avoid a trip to the emergency room.

Food Safety



Nothing is better than an outdoor party or a backyard BBQ in the summer. While the food being cooked tastes great for us, some of it isn't the best for our pets.

Ensure your guests do not feed your pets any "people" food. If your dog (or cat) is visiting all the guests at your party (i.e., begging for food), it's difficult to keep track of where they are and what they are eating.

Keep alcoholic beverages away from pets

If your pet consumes alcohol, it will cause intoxication and lead to alcohol poisoning if they drink too much (though not common).

Even though your dog may not want a sip of your beer, they might enjoy lapping up fruity punches and cocktails. The pre-made mixers used in cocktails and punches may contain Xylitol, an artificial sweetener that can be harmful to dogs.

Mind your grilling activities

Chances are, whenever you cook on the grill, your pets (primarily dogs) will be attracted to the food you're preparing. Avoid letting them lick up the fat that drips from the meat since it is rich in oils that can lead to pancreatitis.

When using a charcoal grill, keep your dog from eating the coals. Even though charcoal is not poisonous, large pieces may cause obstructions and choking if consumed by your dog.

Human food and snacks

Many pet owners know that their pets should avoid certain foods, such as raisins, chocolate, garlic, and onions. Below are some common BBQ foods that can be dangerous to pets.

Bones. Sharing your grilled steak or chicken wings with your dog during summer is not a good idea. Dogs can choke on bones, especially chicken bones, which can cause serious damage to their mouths, throats, and intestines.

Raw meat. Salmonella and E.coli bacteria can be found in uncooked meat, which can harm dogs (and humans).

Hot dogs. Hot dogs may taste good to us, but they aren't good for your dog. Hot dogs contain seasonings like garlic, onion powder, monosodium glutamate (MSG), sugars, and sodium nitrate, which have been linked to cancer. A hotdog link can contain up to 600 mg of sodium, which is way too much for your dog. Lastly, hot dogs are a significant choking hazard!

Corn on the cob. It's not the corn itself that's the problem — it's the cob. This is one of the worst obstructions that dogs can get. If the dog swallows the corn whole and doesn't chew the cob, it doesn't break down. Sometimes, the cob will come out in the dog's stool, but it's rare. Dogs seldom pass corn cobs —



they just shrink-wrap down and cause an obstruction most of the time. Instead of letting your dog chew on a corn cob, give him a safe, dog-appropriate treat to gnaw on.

Salty snacks. Popcorn, pretzels, peanuts, and potato chips are common party foods, but they're too salty for your pet. Seizures, vomiting, diarrhea, and fever are signs of sodium ion poisoning.

Ice cream. Most commercial ice creams are dairy-based, so it's best to avoid giving dogs a taste. Look for dog-appropriate ice cream treats at the supermarket instead.



Summer is the perfect time to spend with your family, including your pets. With a little planning and prevention, our four-legged friends can enjoy the outdoors and summer getaways right along with us while staying safe and healthy at the same time.