



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.

Summer Heat Safety

Spending time outdoors with your pet is great, but the rising temperatures can sometimes limit your outside enjoyment. Heatstroke can be a risk for your four-legged friends in the summer.

It's safe to say that if you feel the heat, your pet will feel it even more. But summer can be safer for your pet if you know the risks of high temperatures and how to help him.

Know the warning signs of heatstroke

5 signs of heat stroke in dogs



1. Excessive & ongoing panting
2. Brick-red or blue-purple gums
3. Lethargic, collapsed, seizures
4. Excessive drooling
5. History of exercise on a hot day, being left unattended in a hot car, or unable to get out of the sun

If you suspect your dog is suffering from heat stroke then you need to contact your vet immediately!

5 signs of heat stroke in cats



1. Open-mouth breathing or panting
2. Brick-red or blue-purple gums
3. Lethargic, collapsed, seizures
4. Excessive drooling
5. History of being left unattended in a hot car, or unable to get out of the sun (e.g. tick paralysis)

If you suspect your cat is suffering from heat stroke then you need to contact your vet immediately!

When the temperature rises, dogs and cats have difficulty dissipating heat because they have furry bodies. When they can't cool themselves, their core temperatures rise rapidly, resulting in heatstroke. Knowing the signs of heatstroke can help prevent your pets from suffering from it.

If you find that your pet is suffering from heatstroke:

- Immediately take your pet to a shady, cool area. Angle a fan directly on them if you have one. Rectal thermometers can help track their temperature.
- Offer cool water to your pet, but don't force them to drink if they don't want to.
- Put a cool (not ice-cold) wet towel under your pet's armpits and around its groin. Apply water to the tips of its ears.
- You should take your pet to an emergency veterinarian facility as soon as possible. This isn't a "just in case" situation. Your pet needs to be treated by a vet, even if you can get them out of the heat and cool them down with wet towels. Your pet's life could be at stake.

Keep your pet cool

Dogs and cats regulate their body temperature by panting and sweating through their paws. Cats lick their fur to keep themselves cool, covering themselves with saliva.

Some breeds of animals have a more challenging time adjusting to extreme heat than others. Persian cats and Pugs, which have flat faces, are more susceptible to heatstroke because they can't pant as effectively as other breeds. It is best to keep these breeds in air-conditioned rooms as much as possible, especially if they are elderly, overweight, or have heart or lung conditions.

Always have fresh, clean water on hand. A hot or humid day can quickly result in dehydration, and pets can suffer urinary, kidney, and gastrointestinal issues if their hydration is not maintained correctly.

A pet who is dehydrated may have the following symptoms:

- Lethargy
- Excessive panting
- Dry gums or mouth
- Sunken eyes

- Decreased appetite
- Decreased urination

If your pet's gums are glossy and wet, they are well hydrated. If they seem sticky and dull, there's a good chance your pet is dehydrated.

Delay spending time outside. Check the weather forecast and temperature before taking your dog for a walk. If it's scorching, postpone walks and hikes. The best time to walk your pet in the summer is early in the morning or later in the day when it cools down.

If you must take your pets outside, ensure there is a shady area for them to get out of the sun and take care not to overexert them. Heatstroke can occur when outside temperatures rise above 80°F (27°C) and humidity increases above 90 percent.

THE MONEY PIT

HOT ASPHALT AWARENESS

AIR TEMP	ASPHALT TEMP
77°	125°
86°	135°
87°	143°

AT 125° F, SKIN DESTRUCTION CAN HAPPEN IN 60 SECONDS.

Data source: Journal of the American Medical Association

Along with hot temperatures, pet owners should also consider the temperature of the ground, particularly pavement. Have you ever noticed how hot it feels as you get closer to the ground? That's because it is! And because your pet walks close to the ground, its body heats up quickly, and its paw pads can burn. Angell veterinarians often see dogs at the Emergency/Critical Care service with paw pads that are burned or peeled off from walking on hot asphalt. Dogs have thick pads, so they don't feel it as much and won't know immediately. So, it's possible to get significant burns before they feel it.

Press the back of your hand against the pavement's surface for about seven seconds — this is an excellent way to test the heat. If the surface feels hot to your hand, it's too hot for your pet to walk on it.

Give your dog a haircut. It is common for dogs to shed their coats at the beginning of summer in preparation for warmer temperatures. However, daily grooming keeps them cool by removing any excess hair (this also helps cats).

You may want to have your long-haired dog groomed regularly (plus, it prevents ticks from infesting your dog). Even though grooming your dog is essential, *do not shave them*. Their fur is insulating, helping them cool down and regulate temperature, so if you

have a dog with a double coat like a Husky, it's okay to use a Furminator to get that undercoat out. But definitely don't shave them.

Invest in some pet sunscreen. Your pet's fur naturally protects it from burning. Still, it's a good idea to buy sunscreen (meant for dogs or cats, not humans) and apply it to areas most exposed to sunlight: the bridge of the nose, tips of the ears, around the groin, and inside the thighs—in general, any place where your dog or cat may have light pigmentation.



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.