



## Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke in Dogs

Summer is here and it brings lots of fun opportunities for activities with your pet, but it also requires some special attention to keep them safe.

Dogs don't sweat like humans. In fact, the only sweat glands on a dog's body are near their paws, and this alone does little to keep them cool. To help them cool, dogs pant, but that is often not enough to keep them safe in the heat of the summer.

### Tips to Keep Your Pet Cool and Safe This Summer:

- Monitor their time outdoors and never leave them outside unattended for extended periods of time. Be sure they have access to shade and fresh water during their time outdoors.
- Help regulate their body temperature by keeping long, thick coats trimmed (but do not SHAVE them, that exposes them to sunburn).
- Use sunscreen on light colored noses and ear tips.
- Try to avoid intense activity/exercise during the heat of the day and instead go out in the very early morning or very late evening.
- Monitor play time and activity levels. Many dogs will play/work/hunt until they drop. You must supervise the activity, and determine when it is time to stop.
- Avoid hot pavement/dark surfaces/hot sand as these surfaces can easily blister your pet's pads. Anything that is too hot for you to walk on barefoot is likely too hot for your pet as well.
- NEVER EVER leave your dog in a hot car with just a cracked window. Even on an 80 degree day, the temperature inside a car can get to 130 degrees very fast. A cracked window does not prevent heat build-up.

### First Signs of Heat Exhaustion:

- Excessive panting
- Skin on the inside of the ears becomes flushed and red.
- Vomiting or diarrhea.

With signs of heat exhaustion, stop your activity and get the dog into a cool place. Provide plenty of fresh water for them to drink. You may also apply cool water (not ice water) to the inner groin area to speed the cooling effect.

### Signs of Heat Stroke:

- Weakness
- Refusal of water.
- Disoriented or walking 'funny'/wobbly.
- Fainting/loss of consciousness.

Heat stroke is an emergency situation. If your dog shows signs of heat stroke, you must cool him down as rapidly as possible. **Don't wait for veterinary treatment. Heat Stroke is an Emergency - Treat the dog NOW!** Hose the dog down with cool water. If your dog is small enough to move - hold him in a tub of cool water. Do not stop treatment until your dog's body temperature is approaching normal. As soon as the dog's internal temperature has stabilized at a near normal level transport the dog to your vet. Heat stroke can leave permanent damage.