

Summer Sun, Fun, and Safety!

When it comes to the summer time heat and sunshine, make sure to follow some safety tips so your pet can join in the fun.

Even if it's only for 10 minutes, don't leave your dog in your car. Aside from being against the law in many states, even a few moments in the heat will turn your car into an oven. This can lead to dehydration, brain damage or even death, and even cracking the car window will not be enough to combat summer heat. You can visit the My Dog is Cool web site to see a chart on how fast your car can become overheated.



Often pet owners will shave down their dogs during the summer time, thinking this will help keep them cool. But ironically, shaving down a dog inhibits their ability to deal with the temperature change! So keep your dogs well groomed by removing all its dead undercoat hair, but remember not to shave them down in order to help them tolerate the summer sun. Your dog's skin will also be at risk from the sun, so sunscreen is recommended. Make sure you use a sunscreen that is specifically made for your dog. Dogs that are shaved, have short white fur, or are hairless are most at risk of sun damage. Other areas of sensitivity are their noses and tips of their ears.

The blacktop street asphalt gets hot. Very hot! Walk your pet on the grass or on the sidewalk instead of on the street. Those hot black roads can hurt their paws. On days that your dog spends a lot of time outside, you'll want to check the dog's paws for sun damage and his fur for ticks. When checking for ticks, make sure you look under the tail, on their stomach, in their ears and between their toes.

Some simple training and safety devices can ease your mind and protect your dog this summer. For example, make sure to give your dogs treats and praise in order to positively reinforce being handled and having his fur and paws looked at. Practice this often so that your dog likes being handled! If you want to use doggie sunscreen on your pup, put it on while your dog is playing ball with you or doing another enjoyable activity so that your dog positively associates sunscreen application with good times

Last but certainly not least, always have plenty of water available for your dog! This will ensure that they keep cool and hydrated, which in turn will keep them healthy and happy this summer.

Resources:

- For more information on summer sun, fun, and safety, please visit: www.education.com/reference/article/Ref_Hot_Weather_Your/
- More Summer tips available from the ASPCA at www.aspc.org/pet-care/pet-care-tips/hot-weather-tips.html and from the AKC at www.akc.org/public_education/summer_safety.cfm.



Heat Stroke

Summer is here, and it's HOT outside! If you and your best friend will be spending time outdoors, make sure that you watch your dog closely for signs of overheating and heat stroke.

Many people don't even realize that their dog is overheating. That happy, long tongue is letting you know your dog is HOT! Heat stroke is a very real danger for your dog and will cause nausea, loss of consciousness, brain damage, and even death. So, make sure your dog has access to a nice, shady place to cool off, with plenty of fresh water to keep him cool & hydrated.

When it's really hot outside – even a casual walk can lead to heat stroke especially if your dog is older or out of shape. Keep your exercise routine to early morning or evenings when it's cooler.

Never leave your dog in your car during hot weather. Dogs left in cars, even with the window cracked open, can overheat very quickly during the summer.

Here's how to recognize heat stroke in your pet. If your dog is suffering from heat stroke, he will be:

- * panting excessively
- * have redness around his eyes
- * show signs of weakness
- * irritability
- * may start vomiting
- * collapse

You can try to cool him down by giving him cool water to drink – not cold water. Cold water may make him vomit.

Try to sponge him down with a cool wet towel or soak him in a tub of cool water and keep a fan on him.

In extreme cases where your dog's gums are grayish, his tongue is blue, or he is unconscious, call your veterinarian. Severe heatstroke is an emergency, and you may need to make a quick trip to the veterinarian or emergency clinic.

Resources

- To see how fast your car can get hot even with the window cracked open, visit www.mydogiscool.com
- Information on heatstroke can be found at www.peteducation.com

**For more information on the Association of Pet Dog Trainers,
visit our Web site at www.apdt.com or call 1-800-PET-DOGS (738-3647) or email information@apdt.com.**