

The so-called carefree days of summer can mean danger for your pets. Take the following precautions to keep your pets happy, healthy and safe during the hot summer months.

Heat stroke can kill

NEVER leave a pet alone in a vehicle, even in the shade. Pets left in cars, or other unventilated areas, or tied in the sun, are susceptible to heat stroke. Since dogs have only a limited ability to sweat, even a short time in a hot environment can be life-threatening. Temperatures inside a parked car can rapidly reach dangerous levels even on relatively mild days, and even if the windows are slightly open. A dog's normal body temperature is 39°C and a temperature of 41°C



can be withstood only for a very short time before irreparable brain damage or death can occur.

Pets left outdoors on hot summer days can also be in serious danger. Dogs should only be left outdoors for short periods, should have sufficient water and a cool, sheltered place out of direct sun. Walking early morning or evening when it is cooler is advisable.

Certain types of dogs - such as northern breeds or short-muzzled dogs like boxers and pugs - can have a more difficult time in the heat. Older dogs, overweight dogs, puppies under six months, dogs with certain medical conditions like lung or heart disease and dogs on certain medications may also be more susceptible to heat exposure.

First Aid for heat stroke

Even if you are cautious, there may be a time when you will have to deal with heatstroke. Familiarize yourself with the signs of heatstroke and what to do. First aid and medical treatment are essential and can help save your dog's life. Time is of the essence!

Signs of heat stroke include:

- Increased heart rate
- Excessive panting or drooling
- Listlessness
- Confusion or disorientation
- Bright red gums
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Collapse, seizure or coma
- Body temperature higher than 40°C

PET SAFETY Summer Time Dangers

What to do:

- Move your dog out of the heat immediately.
- Use a hose or wet towels to start cooling your dog down. Do not use ice. Offer your dog water.
- Take your dog to a veterinarian immediately. Continue cooling him with wet towels during the drive.
- If you're unable to get to a veterinarian right away monitor his temperature and check for signs of shock. Stop the cooling process when your dog's temperature reaches 40°C or his body temperature can drop too low and increase the risk of shock.
- Even if your dog cools down take him to a vet as soon as possible as some medical problems caused by heatstroke may not show up right away.

Pets in pick-up trucks

Dogs allowed to ride loose in the back of a pick-up truck can easily be thrown from the back into on-coming traffic. Flying debris can injure eyes and ears, and the metal flatbed can burn his paws. If your pet can't ride with you in the cab of the truck, leave him at home; it's safer for everyone!

Garden hazards

Insecticides, herbicides and fertilizers are common causes of pet poisoning. Avoid walking your pet on lawns that have been recently sprayed with any of these chemicals; these substances, if ingested, can cause death. As a precaution, rinse her paws with water after your walk.

For your garden maintenance, use non-toxic, natural alternatives. There are many natural gardening supplies available at most gardening centres. Numerous plants are harmful too.

Poisonous warm weather hazards

Many seemingly harmless items can be poisonous



to your pet. Make sure you know your veterinarian's procedures for emergency situations, especially ones that occur after business hours, and keep phone numbers for your veterinarian, the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center, and a local emergency veterinary service in a convenient location. [Click here](#) for more information about the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center and items that are toxic to your pet.

Poisonous hazards include:

- Animal toxins-toads, insects, spiders, snakes and scorpions
- Blue-green algae in ponds
- Citronella candles
- Cocoa mulch
- Compost piles fertilizers
- Flea products
- Outdoor plants and plant bulbs
- Swimming-pool treatment supplies
- Fly baits containing methomyl
- Slug and snail baits containing metaldehyde

Fireworks frighten

Fireworks are terrifying for many pets. They will often run, get lost and end up in animal shelters. When fireworks displays are planned, leave your pet at home and play music or the television to help disguise the noise. Close windows and blinds or curtains.