

Keep Pets Cool, Comfortable and Safe During Hot Weather

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Summer months can be uncomfortable and even dangerous for pets. Temperatures that may be tolerable for adults and children who are dressed accordingly may not be so for animals covered in fur. It's vital to help pets stay comfortable and safe as summer temperatures heat up. Pet owners also must be aware of particular dangers that go hand-in-hand with summertime activities.

PRACTICE VEHICLE SAFETY

Temperatures inside vehicles can rise quickly and considerably in a matter of minutes, even with the windows opened slightly. Pets can suffer irreversible and even fatal organ damage in as little as 10 minutes in a hot car. If you have to run errands, keep pets at home where they will be more comfortable.



STAY OFF OF HOT ASPHALT

If you've ever walked on the hot sand or an asphalt driveway on a hot day, you understand just how scorching those surfaces can get. Dogs and cats do not have protective shoes to wear, so safeguard the delicate pads of their paws by keeping companion animals off of hot surfaces. Schedule walks in the early morning or late afternoon when temperatures are cooler.



PROVIDE A WAY FOR PETS TO COOL OFF

Offer a means for pets to cool off, such as a wading pool or wet towel when you are outside. Keep pets who do not enjoy the heat indoors cool with the air conditioner running on hot days.

EXERCISE CAUTION IN THE WATER

Dogs can get swept away by currents just like human swimmers. If you will be boating, invest in a life jacket for your pooch and look for water hazards, such as currents, sink holes and blue-green algae in lakes and ponds.

CHANGE PET'S EXERCISE REGIMEN

Cut back on the time spent exercising, as pets may have trouble breathing on hot days. When taking your dog for a jog or a run in the summertime, do so on the grass, avoiding asphalt, as mentioned previously.

LET YOUR PET INSIDE

Doghouses can be similar to parked cars on especially hot days, making rising temperatures feel even hotter. And outdoor cats may be able to find shade, but it could be just a few degrees cooler (meaning still too warm). Let your pet hang out inside in an air conditioned room until the day is cooler to reduce their risk of heatstroke.

KEEP PLENTY OF WATER AVAILABLE

Hot weather can cause a pet to use up its fluid stores much more quickly than when it is cooler outside. Before leaving the house, be sure that your pet's water bowls are topped off. Think about putting some ice cubes in the water to slowly melt and keep it cool, but make sure your pet won't attempt to chew the ice cubes, which can be hazardous. Water bottles in small animal cages should be topped off and regularly checked.



GET TO KNOW YOUR PET

Pets display different behaviors and signals when they are feeling unwell. Heavy panting may be an indication that a dog is hot or not feeling well, while other dogs may pant for no apparent reason. Recognizing baseline behavior for your pet can make identifying a problem that much easier.

KNOW WHICH PETS ARE MOST AT RISK

Older, younger, overweight and snub-nosed animals (think pugs, shih tzus, Persian cats, etc.) don't tolerate the heat as well as other animals. Use special caution when it is hot outside for these animals, and check on them frequently.

SWWF



Be cautious of fireworks. Warm weather and fireworks seem to be common companions. The ASPCA advises that fireworks can result in severe burns or trauma to curious pets. Even unlit fireworks — which are made from potentially toxic substances — can be hazardous if they are licked or consumed.

USE COMMON SENSE REGARDING PETS AND HOT WEATHER. CHANCES ARE IF YOU ARE UNCOMFORTABLE SO IS YOUR PET!

Indicators of Heat Stress:

- Possible heavy panting
- Dry or bright red gums
- Thick drool
- Vomiting
- Wobbly legs.

Move pets exhibiting such symptoms to a cool place, drape a damp towel over the animal's body, rewetting the cloth frequently, and get the animal to the vet as soon as you possibly can.



Keeping all of your 4-legged friends happy and healthy!

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**1305 South Gold St.
Centralia, WA
Call us at (360) 736-3361
www.cascadewestvet.com**