

SUMMER TIPS FOR YOUR PET

With the rising temperatures comes the added responsibility of keeping your pets safe. Here are some facts and tips to help keep you and your pet safe and comfortable during our hot summer days

- **Dogs can't sweat. They release heat through their feet and by panting. A dog's normal temperature is about 100 degrees. The only way a dog can cool itself off is to pant and thus circulate cooler air through their body. If the air temperature is close to their body temperature, then they have to pant even harder to cool themselves off. This can lead to overheating and serious health issues in a short amount of time. The following precautions should be taken whenever the temperature is 85 degrees and over.**

- ***NEVER LEAVE YOUR DOG IN A CAR WHEN IT IS HOT OUTSIDE***

Even if you leave the windows open enough for air to circulate, you run the risk of your dog over heating or getting out of the car.

A car's inside temperature can reach upwards of 120 degrees in a matter of minutes. Even if you park in the shade, the car will still be hot inside and there will be no air circulating. The dog could also stress from being left alone and cause themselves to overheat from that stress.

IN CALIFORNIA, IT IS NOW AGAINST THE LAW TO LEAVE AN ANIMAL UNATTENDED IN THE CAR IF THERE IS A PERCEPTION OF DANGER TO THE PET. YOUR ANIMAL CAN BE TAKEN FROM YOU AND YOU CITED IF SOMEONE REPORTS THAT YOUR ANIMAL IS IN DISTRESS

- ***ALWAYS GIVE YOUR PET ACCESS TO FRESH WATER***

Dogs need to drink water to cool off. They need to have access to fresh, clean, cold water at all times. When house breaking a puppy, you can limit their water intake by giving drinks throughout the day or by giving ice cubes as a substitute for water when necessary. When out on walks, carry water with you for both you and your dog. There are portable fabric bowls available through pet stores to carry with you along with your water and poop bags for your pet.

- ***ALWAYS GIVE YOUR PET ACCESS TO SHADE OR A COOL ENVIRONMENT TO GO TO WHEN NECESSARY***

If you must leave your dog outside during the day in the summer, make sure they have access to a shady place in the yard. A tree or an umbrella set up will give your dog some relief from the sun and heat. A good idea as well is to set up a baby pool for your dog to go lay in when they get hot. Place the pool in a shady part of the yard. You may have to show them how to get in it and what it is all about but once they get it, they will love laying in the cool water when they get hot. A misting system set up under an umbrella or along a fence will also cool the air around that area by a good 10 to 20 degrees.

The best scenario when there are extreme temperatures outside is to have your pet stay indoors in the air conditioning. Many snub nosed breeds such as bulldogs and pugs can

not take the extreme temperatures and must be kept inside but it is a good idea to bring all animals in when the temperatures soar above 100 degrees.

If you must work and can not trust them loose in the house, you can crate train your dog or confine them to one area of the house and have a neighbor or pet sitter come in and check on the dog or take them out for a walk or potty break during the day. It is a good idea to have a person to contact to go check on your pets when you are not home in case of a power outage or other such emergency. Another idea is on very very hot days, to put your dog in a doggie day care where they can monitor your pet's comfort and give them some supervised exercise at the same time.

- ***KEEP WALKS AND EXERCISE TO A MINIMUM DURING THE DAY***

The sidewalks and roads can get very hot very quickly and burn a dog's feet. Try to walk or exercise your dog in the early morning and later evening hours. Keep exercise to short excursions in the heat of the day. Realize that many dogs, like children, do not have good self limiting powers. They will just go and go and go. They will not stop or limit themselves despite the fact that they are getting into trouble. You as the handler must recognize when the dog has had enough and stop the exercise and play.

Taking the dog to the beach on a hot day may seem like a good idea but it is not. The sand is hot and strenuous to run on and even under an umbrella, the dog will not get the relief from the heat that they need. The ocean is obviously a nice place to cool down in but for a dog that does not know how to swim or likes to play and run at warp speed, it can become a bad place. The salt water can make them sick if ingested in excess and there are many areas where the water can get hard to swim in (rip tides, strong waves, etc) that can get an inexperienced swimmer into trouble quickly.

If you are going to go to the beach with your dog, check that dogs are allowed on the beach. There are many beaches where dogs are not allowed.

Keep your dog on a leash at all times. Dogs can get over excited by all the stimulus at the beach and decide to chase the birds or go visit the people down the beach or go into the water too far out. It is also the law that a dog be on a leash at all times when out in public.

Make sure your dog has access to shade and fresh water. Avoid them drinking too much salt water or eating anything that might be in the water.

Rinse your dog off after going into the ocean. The water can contain salts and chemicals that could burn your dog's coat or skin.

Watch for sunburn. Dogs can become sunburned just like people, particularly short haired or light colored dogs

- ***BE AWARE OF OTHER SUMMER DANGERS***

Summer picnics, holidays, and get togethers can cause all kinds of problems for your dogs. New foods such as barbeque or ice cream treats can be very tempting to a dog. They can also make your dog very sick. Supervise your dog at all times when around picnic areas where things like hot greasy foods or bones from chicken and such could be accessible to your pet.

Be aware of fireworks and such. This can cause many dogs to panic and run or jump a fence. It is not a good idea to take your dog with you to watch fireworks. Trust me, they will not enjoy it!!

Keep them at home, inside, where it is safe and quiet. A TV or radio left on will help drown out the noise from outside. If your dog is very anxious about the noises, consult your vet about a sedative to help them through the anxiety.

Ticks, fleas, and mosquitoes are very active during the summer months. Check your dog regularly for parasites and use a topical preventative if necessary to keep creatures off your dogs. If you live in an area where mosquitoes are abundant, you may want to discuss heartworm preventative medications with your vet. Ticks can carry many serious illnesses so check your dog thoroughly for ticks after hiking or playing in areas where ticks may be found.

Watch for bee, wasp, or spider bites to your dog. Talk to your vet about signs and symptoms of an insect bite and what to do if this happens.

If you live in an area where there are snakes, be aware of that and take precautions to avoid a snake bite. There are vaccines available through your vet to help with the reaction your dog might have to a snake bite as well as training to teach your dog to stay away from snakes.

During the summer time, there is more access to yard and plant products that could be poisonous to your pet. Read the labels of any product or plant that you may bring into your dog's area to make sure they are not toxic. Store any chemicals or plant products safely away from your pet.

KEEP YOUR VET'S NUMBER IN A EASILY ACCESSIBLE PLACE. IT IS ALSO A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE AN EMERGENCY VET'S CONTACT INFORMATION HANDY IN YOUR AREA IN CASE SOMETHING HAPPENS AT OFF HOURS.

Keep current ID on your dog. Summer gives you the ability to go out and do more things with your pet. This also means they have more of a chance of getting lost. Keep a current picture of your pet and their microchip number in a handy place in case you need it in an emergency.

When traveling with your pet, add a temporary tag to their collar with the address and/or phone number of where you will be staying.

Plan ahead of time and get the name and phone number of local vets for the area where you are traveling to. This can save valuable time if and when necessary.

Keep your dog well groomed all year but particularly in the summer months. Regular brushing and bathing will help with shedding and keep your dog cool by removing undercoat. **SHAVING YOUR DOG IN THE SUMMER WILL NOT KEEP YOUR DOG COOLER.** The coat acts as an insulator for the dog.

Bathing and regular brushing will also keep your dog's skin in good condition from any allergies that might come up as well as give you an opportunity to look for parasites or hot spots that be developing from the heat.

- ***TEACH YOUR DOG POOL SAFETY IF YOU HAVE A POOL***

If your dog has access to a pool in your yard, you must make sure that they are pool safe. Can they swim to the stairs if they fall in? Don't assume your dog knows how to

swim. Many dogs panic when they fall in a pool and instead of swimming will just flail around and exhaust themselves by trying to get out on the sides of the pool. It is easy to teach a dog to swim to the stairs of your pool by just taking the time to do it. **DON'T JUST THROW THEM IN AND FIGURE IT OUT.** Take the time to teach them where the steps are and how to swim comfortably. Any qualified trainer can help you with this if need be.

If they are not pool safe, then they should be kept away from the pool area until they are. There are alarms available that will sound if a child falls into a pool; these would also work for your dog.

- ***KNOW THE SIGNS OF HEAT STRESS IN YOUR PET***

HEAVY PANTING

DROOLING

INABILITY TO FIND A COMFORTABLE PLACE

HIGH FEVER

RAPID PULSE

If your dog is displaying any of these symptoms after being out in the sun or heat.....

CALL YOUR VET IMMEDIATELY!!

TAKE YOUR DOG'S TEMPERATURE AND BEGIN TO COOL YOUR DOG DOWN SLOWLY BY GETTING THEM INTO COOL WATER. SUBMERGE THEM IN A TUB OF COOL (NOT COLD) WATER OR RUN THE HOSE ON THEIR BELLY AND GROIN TO BRING THEIR TEMPERATURE DOWN SLOWLY.

TAKE THEM TO THE VET EVEN IF YOU GET THEM COOLED DOWN TO MAKE SURE THEY ARE OUT OF DANGER