

Summer Dangers and Precautions

Heatstroke can be fatal. Signs may include excessive panting and salivation, unresponsiveness, anxiety, warm dry skin, a high fever, rapid heart rate, weakness, the inability to move, and eventual collapse. If your pet shows any of these signs, hose them down, pack towels soaked in cool water around the body and bring them to our clinic (or the nearest veterinary or emergency clinic) immediately.

To protect your pet from heatstroke:

- **Never** leave them in a closed up car. Just a few minutes can be deadly. It is not enough to crack a window.
- Do not leave them outside on very hot days for prolonged periods of time. Make sure their outdoor area has shade and access to plenty of water.
- During very hot days, limit exercise to early morning or evening hours.

Other Heat Issues

Asphalt, concrete, and rocks (on our outdoor trails) can cause severe burns to the pads on your pet's feet. This can result in pain and damage to the paws. Pickup truck beds can also become extremely hot and burn very quickly. It is best to gradually build up your pet's tolerance to asphalt surfaces if they have been confined to the yard during the winter months. Make sure to check you pet's paws frequently to make sure they are not burned, cracked, or lacerate. Avoid walking your dog on hot surfaces during the hot, sunny hours of the summer days. Watch for signs such as not wanting to continue on their walk, limping, or favoring their paws. If you suspect your pet may have burned the bottom of their feet, be sure to seek veterinary care. Bandages, antibiotics, and pain medication is the usual treatment for this condition.

Insects

During the spring and summer months, our pets frequently come in contact with the insect population in their environment. Most of the time, there are no problems from these encounters. Occasionally, your pet may get stung or bitten by a wasp, bee, or spider and have a reaction to that bite. You may see a sudden swelling on the face (usual place) or other part of the body. If you suspect your pet has had an incident with an insect, please call. The usual course of treatment is an antihistamine injection along with a steroid injection to help reduce swelling.

Toxic Plants

Another hazard to pets during the active, outdoor summer months is their willingness to eat a lot of things they shouldn't put in their mouth! Some plants can be toxic to our pets and may require immediate veterinary care. If you notice your pet drooling or foaming at the mouth, acting 'drunk' or uncoordinated, trembling, abnormal breathing, vomiting and/or diarrhea, or you suspect they have eaten something poisonous, please call. Treating toxin ingestions ASAP is extremely important and gives us a chance for a better outcome.

The Wild Ones

Even though we are in a major metropolitan area, there are many predators living in our neighborhoods. Cats and very small dogs are easy targets for the Fox, Coyotes, Hawks, Owls, etc. that share our world. We recommend cats be indoor pets to keep them from becoming meals for these predators.