



## Hot Weather Hazards



Summer is here; fun, sun, and plenty of time outdoors enjoying it all. Of course, with all those pleasantries come hazards as well, especially for our furry friends.

Here are some tips to keep everyone healthy.

### **Heat Stroke**

Everyone knows you shouldn't leave a dog in a closed-up car, but how dangerous is it? According to a report by the Department of Geosciences from San Francisco State University, temperatures rise rapidly in a closed car. Cracking the window doesn't help at all.

When the temperature outside is 80°, inside a closed car it will get to 99° **within 10 minutes**, to 109° **within 20 min** and it just gets worse! It won't take long for your dog to be in serious trouble. **NEVER leave your dog in the car**, not even just to run in for quick minute. A short delay could be deadly.

Heat stroke can happen easier than you think. Dogs can't cool off as well as we do because they don't sweat and only lose heat by panting. That makes them much more prone to heat stroke. Take your walks in the early morning or late evening when it's cooler for both of you.

If your dog is panting heavily, having trouble breathing, has a seizure, can't walk straight, or collapses get to your veterinarian immediately. If symptoms are milder, you can wet him down at home with cool water.

Start with his head to cool down his brain. If he has a heavy coat, soak him to the skin. If you use a garden hose, let the water run out first to make sure it's not hot. Let him dry naturally; don't towel-dry him. If his panting doesn't stop within a short time, take him to the vet immediately.

### **Outdoor Pets**

Provide a shaded area for your pet to stay outdoors as well as plenty of fresh water. Some dogs will dig holes to lie down in the cooler dirt. Remember, hot asphalt can burn your dog's pads. Have you ever noticed how tar bubbles up on streets when it gets very hot? Imagine what that can do to your dog.

### **Water Dogs**

Dogs need life jackets just as much as people do. Some dogs aren't great swimmers, and they can't always make it back to shore. The jackets also come with a handy handle to help you haul your dog back into the boat.

If you visit the ocean, don't let your dog drink the salt water. If your dog is caught in an undertow and goes out into the water, **DO NOT** try to rescue him. Many dogs will be able to get back on their own and the risk of you drowning is too high.

Swimming pools can also be hazardous. Dogs that fall into them often can't get out. Covers on pools can be a threat, as the dog doesn't realize it's not solid. Get a pool alarm to alert you if something goes into the pool.



**Poisons**

Chemicals used on lawns can be poisonous to our pets. Wash your pet's paws after being outside if they may have walked on treated lawns. Car chemicals can be a problem, especially antifreeze. Clean up any spills promptly and thoroughly.

Many plants are poisonous, especially lilies, and they poison cats more than dogs. Poisons used to kill rodents, slugs and snails, can be deadly to your pet. Keep all of them out of reach from curious pets.

**Sunscreen**

This isn't just for humans! Light colored pets, especially those with pink noses, are at risk of sunburn as well as skin cancer. If your pet is spending time outdoors, protect the thin coated, non-pigmented areas. Use a pet sunscreen that is safe if your pet licks it. Make sure the product is safe for cats.

Cats will often survive that height with few serious injuries due to their ability to position their body to work like a parachute. They need the distance to position themselves correctly and to slow down. The cure for this is to make screens secure or keep cats away from an open window.

**Bugs and More Bugs**

Mosquitoes are so annoying! Pets don't usually get the itchy bumps we do; however, some pets will react to the bites. Cats often will develop a crusty area over the nose that can look quite nasty and you wouldn't think they were due to mosquito bites.

Mosquitoes also spread heartworms to dogs and cats. There are repellants safe for pets; however, the best option is to keep cats indoors. Treat all your pets regularly with a heartworm preventive medicine.

Fleas and ticks come marching out in full force during warm weather. Protect your pets on schedule and treat them year-round.



**Summary**

Have fun during the summer but take precautions to keep your pets safe. Make sure your pets have microchips to identify them in case they get lost and that they are up to date on their rabies vaccinations. This is especially important if you are traveling with your pets.

Cats are much less likely to encounter most of these hazards. They rarely go for car rides, usually don't like to swim and don't play hard in hot weather. They tend to take it easy where it's cool.

However, dogs do all these things. You can avoid most problems with just a few simple steps. Our pets count on us to keep them safe!

**High-rise Syndrome**

This happens to cats (dogs usually don't do this) that fall out of windows. It usually occurs during warm weather.

People in apartment buildings have windows open and the cat lies in the window pushing against the screen. They could also jump at a bug on the screen. The screen gives way and the cat goes flying out the window.

The extent of the injury depends on the distance the cat falls. Higher than six or seven floors is actually better.

