

Summer Safety

Walking:

Of course, you can walk your dog in the summer. The best times are early in the morning or later in the evening. Two main reasons; the temperature is not as hot, and the sidewalks will not be too hot for the pads on the dog's paws. If you can't go at these times, then try going to a park where there is grass or shorten yours walking time.

Heat Stroke:

If your dog is outside on a hot day, make sure there is a shady spot to rest. Doghouses are not good shelter during the summer as they can trap heat. A child's wading pool with fresh water can be a refreshing dip for your dog.



Heat exhaustion is common in dogs. It can happen in your own yard, or on a walk. Dogs cool themselves by panting. If panting does not reduce the body temperature the dog will develop heat stroke.

Early signs

- * rapid breathing
- * heavy panting
- * salivation

Other signs

- fatigue, muscle tremors, staggering.
- dark or bright red tongue and gums
- seizures, bloody diarrhea or vomiting,

Treatments:

- * Apply wet towels or cloths to help cool the dog's body down. (not ice water)
- * Carry the dog to a cool, shady place, and
- * Try to give the dog small amounts of water, and
- * Immediately call a vet.

Travelling:

Cars: Most dogs love to ride in the car. If you are going to run some errands, and it's 100 degrees outside, don't take him with you. If for some reason you have to take him along, do not ever leave him in the car without the A/C on. Even with the windows cracked, that car will heat up fast enough to cause brain damage or death in just a few minutes. Put a sunshade in the windows. Never drive with the dog on your lap. They should be wearing a seat belt harness or in a crate that is secured to the back seat.

Trucks: If your dog loves to travel in the back of your pickup, please avoid the temptation. If for some reason you must take your dog with you in the back of your truck, make sure the surface of where the dog has to sit/stand is not metal, and does not absorb heat. Test it. Leave your truck out in the sun for two hours and then go stand in it for 20 minutes in your bare feet (or sit on it with your bare butt!). If it feels hot to you, or it burns the skin right off your body, it feels that way to your dog, too. It is very dangerous to drive with a dog in the back of a pick-up truck. Not only can flying debris cause serious injury, but a dog may be unintentionally thrown into traffic if the driver suddenly hits the brakes, swerves, or is hit by another car. Dogs should ride either in the cab (in a crate or wearing a seat belt harness designed for dogs) or in a secured crate in the bed of the truck.

RV: Never leave your dog totally enclosed in an RV or motor home completely shut up, even if the generator and AC are running. Crack a window or door or run the exhaust fan.

Air, Train or Ship: Check with your travel agent for specific rules. If you do ship a dog, put icepacks or an ice blanket in the dog's crate. Provide a container of fresh water, as well as a container of frozen water that will thaw over the course of the trip.

Outside the Province: Finally, if you are traveling outside of your province or country, check with your Veterinarian to make sure your dog has all the necessary shots and paper work. Once you get to your location, scout out where the nearest animal hospital is.

Water:

Drinking Water: Change your dog's water often in warm weather. Keep your dog's dish in the shade so the water will not heat up as fast.

Pools: If your dog has access to your swimming pool or spa, make sure the dog is trained to get out of the pool. The dog needs to know how to get to the steps. If there are no steps or shallow areas, like in some lap pools, make sure the pool is fenced and locked so the dog can't get in. Every year puppies and dogs drown in backyard pools because they could jump in, but they couldn't get out.



At the Beach: Make sure there is plenty of fresh clean drinking water and a shady spot to relax. Dogs, especially those with short hair, white fur, and pink skin, can sunburn. Limit your dog's exposure during the day. Check with a lifeguard for daily water conditions. If you're swimming for the first time with your dog, start in shallow water and coax him in by calling his name. Encourage him with toys or treats. Or, let him follow another experienced dog he is friendly with. Never throw your dog into the water.

If your dog begins to paddle with his front legs, lift his hind legs and help him float. He should quickly catch on and keep his back end up. Don't let your dog overdo it; swimming is very hard work and he may tire quickly. Never leave your dog unattended in water. Running on the sand is strenuous exercise. A dog that is out of shape can easily pull a tendon or ligament, so keep a check on your dog's activity. Salt and other minerals in ocean water can damage your dog's coat, so rinse him off at the end of the day. Dogs are easy targets for sea lice and jellyfish. Not all beaches permit dogs; check local ordinances before heading out. If you are going boating, ensure your dog has a life preserver that properly fits.

Other Summer Hazards:

Antifreeze: is actually a year-round hazard. With the warmer temperatures of summer, cars over heat and may leak antifreeze. (This is the bright green liquid found oozing from that car with the engine fan on.) Also, people change their antifreeze and may spill or leave unused antifreeze out where pets can access it. Antifreeze tastes sweet and is inviting to pets (and children). It is also extremely toxic in very small amounts. Call your Veterinarian (or Physician) immediately if any ingestion is suspected.

Lawns: Summer is often a time when people fertilize their lawns and work in their gardens. But beware: Plant food, fertilizer, and insecticides can be fatal if your pet ingests them. In addition, more than 700 plants can produce physiologically active or toxic substances in sufficient amounts to cause harmful effects in animals. For more information, see our list of dangerous plants.



Events: Don't take your pets to crowded summer events such as concerts or fairs. The loud noises, fireworks and crowds, combined with the heat, can be stressful and dangerous for pets. For your pet's well being, leave her at home.