

June 2021

HEAT PET SAFETY!

It's the beginning of summer, which means more time outside!

But as the temperatures start to get warmer, make sure you keep an eye on your pets, as they aren't able to tell you when they get too warm!

What signs should you watch out for?

What is the difference between heat stroke and hyperthermia?

Heat stroke symptoms can start off mild, such as panting, excessive drooling, or an increased heart rate. However, after excessive exposure to heat for long periods of time, more severe symptoms start to emerge, such as little to no urine production (a sign of kidney failure), respiratory distress (from fluid building up in the lungs), vomiting or defecating blood, collapse, seizures, and eventually death.

When heat stroke occurs, your pet needs to be seen by a veterinarian to help correct the organ dysfunction. Removing your pet from excessive heat (such as an enclosed car) and slowly cooling down your pet by spraying them down in cool water or by wetting the paws with isopropyl alcohol will help to cool the body temperature. However, care must be taken not to cool down your pet too quickly. If ice or cold water is used, the blood vessels may



constrict too quickly, preventing more heat from dissipating. Furthermore, cooling too fast may lead to shivering, which may actually cause the internal temperature to rise.

Hyperthermia is when a dog or cat's body temperature rises above 103.0°F. A lot of different events can lead to hyperthermia, some of which can be relatively benign. Things such as having a fever from an infection or running around outside on a hot day, while having the potential to become serious situations, are usually not life-threatening and can even be considered normal physiologic responses!

However, there are times when hyperthermia becomes too severe & can lead to heat stroke. For example, dogs left outside in excessive heat for too long, dogs with prolonged seizure activity, & severe infections can sometimes raise the body temperature to extreme levels. Heat stroke occurs when the core body temperature rises above 106.0°F, as this is around the temperature when vital organs are no longer able to function as they should.

Preventing hyperthermia is the best way to keep your pet safe from overheating! So make sure you keep an eye on your pet during these summer months, and stay cool!

Best regards,
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