

Tips For Caring For Your Pet During the Summer Months

1. **Never** leave your pet in the car. Even in the shade, the temperature inside a car can reach over 120 degrees within minutes. This is especially dangerous to pets because they cannot sweat and can only dissipate heat through panting and through their foot pads. If a pet is seen in a vehicle, please alert a store manager immediately and the animal control or police if no one returns within several minutes.
2. **Never** put your pet in the back of a truck. They can easily fall or jump out or be hit by debris, branches, etc. They should either ride in the cab (in a crate or wearing a seat belt harness designed for pets) or in a well secured and ventilated crate in the back of the truck.
3. Be sure your pet has plenty of fresh, cool water at all times.
4. Be careful not to expose your pet to plant food, fertilizers or insecticides. Read labels carefully before applying to the yard and take the necessary precautions with your pets.
5. Be sure your pet is wearing a collar and identification tags at all times. Better yet, have your pet microchipped so he/she can still be returned home if the collar is lost. Also be sure to keep the information for the microchip updated with each move you make.
6. Have your pet on heartworm prevention year round and apply flea and tick treatments/preventatives during the warmer months to prevent parasites and the diseases associated with them. Talk to your veterinarian about these preventatives if you are not currently using them on your pets.
7. Prevent free access of your pets to pools, ponds, and other water hazards and only allow your pet to swim under your supervision. Be sure that your pet can easily get out of the water if he/she becomes tired.
8. On hot days, exercise your pet in the early morning or later in the evening. This is especially important for pets that are older, have thick hair coats, or have short noses because they are more prone to heat stress/stroke. This is also important to pets with thin and light colored hair coats, because they are prone to sunburns. You can apply zinc oxide free sunscreen to their noses, ear tips, and bellies to help protect them from the sun's damaging rays when exposure is unavoidable. Also, be aware of hot asphalt that can burn your pet's paws.
9. If your pet does become overheated (as seen by heavy panting, staggering about, vomiting, unconsciousness, etc.), move your pet into the shade and cool him/her with cool (not cold) water applied to the body. Also, place cold towels around your pet's neck and head. Call your veterinarian.