

## SUNBURN

If your dog has a light-coloured or thin coat consider applying sunblock (with titanium and zinc oxide). Ensure that you only use a sunblock formulated for pets or babies (scent-free is best). Be sure to cover the tips of your dog's ears and nose, the skin around its mouth, and its back.

If your dog gets sunburnt, apply a cold compress or Aloe Vera gel until you can get to a vet.

## HEATSTROKE

Heatstroke is a very real threat for dogs in summer. On a hot day, the temperature inside your car can reach 39°C in 10 minutes. Even in the shade with windows down, the temperature can rise to a deadly 49°C in 30 minutes.

Dogs overheat much more quickly than humans as they cannot sweat like we can. Instead they pant to dissipate heat and cool their bodies. This is almost impossible to do when the air in their immediate environment is thick and hot, as it is in a hot car. Your dog's normal body temperature is about 38.5°C. Their body can withstand a higher temperature for only a short amount of time before irreversible damage is done, such as brain damage or even death.

If you think a dog is suffering heatstroke, seek treatment **immediately**. Signs of heatstroke:

- Heavy panting;
- Excessive salivation;
- Extremely red gums and tongue;
- Lack of co-ordination;
- Vomiting/diarrhoea;
- Loss of consciousness.

## ALLERGIES

Fleas, mould, plants, and other allergens are common during summer. Allergies cause itching (and excessive scratching), coughing, sneezing, discomfort, and other problems for your dog. Keep them away from allergy triggers wherever possible and if necessary, ask your veterinarian about whether your pet would benefit from a canine antihistamine or other medication.

## PARASITES

Ticks, fleas, mosquitoes, flies, and other insects are at their peak during the summer months. Talk to your vet about appropriate protection such as collars, sprays, shampoos, dips, and other products.

## EMERGENCY FIRST AID

If a dog has heatstroke, give immediate first aid by cooling with water or other liquids (room temperature liquids are preferable as ice cold liquids can bring on shock or hypothermia).

- Wet the coat and skin thoroughly. Focus on the belly and inside of the legs;
- Spray or sponge the dog until their body temperature is lowered;
- When the dog is cooling down and responding, gently dry the body;
- If the dog is conscious give them small amounts of water to drink;
- Seek veterinary attention ASAP.

*If you find a dog locked in a car in distress, please call the Police or SPCA immediately.*

# Summer Sense

**How to keep your dog safe and well in the sun**





## SUMMER BASICS

For most dogs summer means ‘fun in the sun’, but there are a few things we need to consider to ensure that summer is also safe and comfortable for them...

- Prevent dehydration by providing your dog with **unrestricted access to fresh and cool water** both indoors and outside. Ice cubes and frozen chicken/beef broth encourage your dog to take in more fluids and help keep it cool. You can also feed your dog wet dog food during the summer to increase its fluid intake;
- Make sure your dog has **access to shade** when outside;
- Take **walks during cooler hours** of the day;
- When walking, **stay off hot surfaces** (like asphalt, sand and stones) because it can burn your dog's paws;
- Check with your vet whether it is appropriate to **shave or clip** your dog's coat;
- **Never leave your dog alone in the car** in summer.

## SWIMMING

There is nothing nicer than cooling your paws on a hot summer's day but be sure to be water-wise:

- Be wary of rips, strong tides and currents when swimming in rivers and the sea.

- If boating, don't forget to get your dog a lifejacket too.
- Chlorine can irritate a dog's skin and upset its stomach. Rinse your dog with fresh water after swimming in a pool and do not let it drink more than a small amount of pool water.
- Standing water, such as puddles, swamps and low-level rivers, can be dangerous for dogs to ingest.
- Never let dogs swim unattended.

## ROAD TRIPS

Everyone loves a summer road trip, but sometimes we forget to make sure our four-legged friends are catered-for too. Here are some things to remember.

Before you leave:

- Make sure your pet has a registration tag and phone number on its collar and is microchipped;
- Make sure vaccinations and health-checks are up to date;
- Pack any special food or medication your dog requires;
- Make sure your dog is happy travelling in the car and seek help if required to overcome anxiety and car-sickness.

On the road:

- Use a crate, seatbelt clip or other means of restraining your dog for everyone's safety;
- Before leaving, exercise your dog well;

- Plan for toilet and water breaks every 2-3 hours;
- Keep the car cool while travelling;
- Don't let your dog stick their head out the window – flying debris can cause injuries;
- Never leave your dog alone in the car.

## BBQS AND PICNICS

Barbecues, campfires and picnics are super-tempting for dogs - all those wonderful smells and the excitement of lots of people and noise! Here are a few things to bear in mind when planning your event:

- Follow the usual rules about dogs and food and keep your dog away while people are eating;
- Keep dogs away from campfires, barbecues and other hot cooking sources – sometimes the temptation of a sausage or perfect stick can cause a dog to ignore the heat, resulting in injury;
- Ensure that you keep these things well away from pets: Charcoal, matches and lighter fluid; citronella and other insect-repellents; alcohol and other intoxicants;
- Don't let guests give your dog “people food”. Consider having some dog treats on hand for rewards;
- Keep children supervised at all times;
- If your dog is looking overwhelmed put them inside and away from guests.