

Summer Heat Reminders for Your Pet from the Veterinary Specialty Center of Tucson

It's hot in Arizona all year around, and your pet needs your help to protect him or her from the heat. Your pet can suffer brain damage or die from heatstroke if trapped in high temperatures for just a short amount of time. To prevent heat stroke, don't ever leave your pet in the car, not even for a few seconds! Your car with the windows cracked and parked in the shade can reach a deadly 100 - 120F degrees in a matter of a few minutes! If your pet is on medication, has a heart or respiratory disease, is older, has a short nose or heavy coat then he/she may be more at risk for heat stroke. During the summer months in Tucson, its best to leave your pet in your air conditioned home. Remember to refill your pet's water bowl frequently. When the heat index is high consider leaving your dog at home when you jog or walk. Dogs don't sweat like we do, so they can't cool off as well, or as rapidly as we can.

If your pet displays any of the following heat stroke symptoms seek veterinary care immediately:

- Excessive panting
- Excessive salivating
- Weakness/dullness
- Body temperature of 104F degrees or more. (You can take your dog's temperature just like you would an infant's, by using a rectal thermometer. A dog's normal body temperature is between 100.5-102.5 degrees.)
- Collapse
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Increased pulse
- Thumping or bounding heart rate
- Dark red or purple tongue or gums
- Depression or stupor
- Glazed eyes
- Unsteady gait
- Seizures or coma.



If you suspect that your pet has become overheated you must lower your pet's body temperature gradually with cool (not ice) water. If your pet is responsive, you may let your pet lick an ice cube. Do not force water down your pet's throat, as this could cause aspiration of water into the lungs. Do not cool your pet's body temperature lower than 103F degrees, because your pet's body temperature may become too cold, too quickly. Take your pet to your veterinarian immediately. You may think your pet looks okay, but your pet's brain, liver, kidneys and blood may still be at risk. Veterinary emergency rooms, such as the **Veterinary Specialty Center of Tucson can handle your pet's emergencies 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.** Your pet depends on you for safety, so please feel free to call the Veterinary Specialty Center of Tucson at, 520-795-9955 anytime day or night for more lifesaving information.