

Looking after your pet in the hot weather

Dogs cannot sweat through the skin, and mainly lose heat through panting ? if you imagine wearing a fur coat whilst out on a walk it gives some understanding how easily they can develop heatstroke! So as the temperature rises, it's important to make sure your pets are kept cool and comfortable. There are lots of ways to do this:

- Make sure your pet always has access to fresh water, including taking some with you on a walk.- Stuff a kong and pop it in the freezer to make a refreshing treat.- Make sure there's a shady spot in the garden if your pet goes outdoors. If there is no shade in your garden you can easily create some by placing some cloth or cardboard over an area to keep the sun out.- Put a paddling pool or water spray toy out in the garden for them to play in. - Keep up with their daily grooming ? matted hair traps in heat in dogs and cats. If your pet is long haired consider getting them a shorter trim in the summer. - Walk your dogs in the cooler morning and evening times- Dogs paw pads can burn on hot pavements ? if it is too hot for your hand it is too hot for their paws.- Be particularly careful with short nosed dogs such as pugs and bulldogs, and pets who are overweight as they can overheat very easily- Paddling or swimming is a great form of exercise in the hot weather ? but always make sure to avoid areas with strong tides or currents, and check the water is clean/free from algae.

Symptoms of heat stroke include agitation, stretching out, panting heavily, drooling, hot skin, glazed eyes, vomiting and collapse.

If you feel your pet is becoming hot try cooling down with damp cool cloth (especially in cats), or a water spray (dogs). If the symptoms persist then please ring us immediately for advice.

And finally, never leave your dog in the car - even on a mild day a car can quickly become an oven, even with the windows open.