

Prevent Pet Heatstroke

This playbook provides tips and strategies for protecting pets from heatstroke during hot weather. It explains the signs of heatstroke to watch for in pets and outlines the immediate actions pet owners can take to prevent this dangerous condition.

Step 1: **Awareness**

Understand that all pets are at risk of heatstroke in hot weather, but some, like brachycephalic breeds, the very young or old, and overweight pets, are at an even greater risk.

Step 2: **Signs**

Be vigilant for early signs of heatstroke in pets, which can include excessive panting, drooling, lethargy, uncoordinated movements, vomiting, and in severe cases, seizures or collapse.

Step 3: **Shade**

Provide a cool, shaded area for your pet to relax when outdoors. Make sure this area is well-ventilated and protected from direct sunlight.

Step 4: **Hydration**

Ensure your pet always has access to fresh, cool water. Increase the number of water stations in and around your home during hot weather.

Step 5: **Exercise**

Limit exercise on hot days, and avoid the hottest parts of the day for any outdoor activities. Early morning or evening is preferable for walks or playtime.

Step 6: **Environment**

Keep your home cool with air conditioning or fans, and consider using cooling mats or vests for your pet. Never leave your pet in a parked car, even with the windows open.

Step 7: **Grooming**

Maintain your pet's coat with regular grooming to help with temperature regulation. However, do not shave your pet without professional advice, as their coat can also protect them from sunburn.

Step 8: **Immediate Care**

If heatstroke is suspected, immediately move your pet to a cooler area. Apply cool water to the skin or fur, and fan them to promote cooling. Offer small amounts of cool water to drink. Contact your veterinarian immediately.

General Notes

Preventative Measures

Prevention is the best approach to protect your pet from heatstroke. Anticipate heat waves and implement these steps proactively.

Veterinary Urgency

Heatstroke is life-threatening and requires urgent veterinary care. Even if the pet seems to recover, internal damage might not be immediately apparent.

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