

ORCHARD HILLS VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Heat Stress

The long, hot days of summer don't have to be hazardous to your pet's health. A little precaution can go a long way in protecting your pets from seasonal health threats. Your responsibilities increase with all the dangers that four legged friends are subject to between December and February.

1. Don't lock your pet in a hot car, this is a potential death trap during the hot summer months because temperatures inside the car can easily climb to 49°C on a sunny day.

NOTE: Shutting your dog in a car is now an offence punishable by Law.

2. Don't tie your pet up in the sun where it is unable to get shade.

3. Fresh water MUST be within reach at all times but don't leave the water in the sun to heat up.

4 Don't let the children, in their exuberance, force the animals to heavy exercise - jumping, fetching etc., in the full summer midday sun.

5. Animals die of heat stroke just as easily as humans. Shade is essential for all animals but especially for the dog and cat. Keep your pet's kennel well ventilated and positioned near a well shaded area where your pet can avoid the midday sun and heat.

6. Food helps to avoid heat exhaustion.

7. Have heavy coats of fur or wool clipped.

8. The old or sick or very young need special care.

9. The daily walk is best left to late evening (or early morning.)

10. Wipe hot puppies with a wet towel. Don't suddenly dump them in a tub or under the hose when affected by heat. Do it gradually then thoroughly. Put the dog in front of a FAN for a while after wetting.

11. Don't forget the pet sheep or goat, they also need shade, water, shearing etc

12. Heat stress (Hyperthermia) can be caused by higher than normal body temperature occurring from exposing the animal to extreme heat or over exertion. Dogs are most at risk if they are flat faced breeds e.g. Boxer, Pokes, Pugs & Staffies. Be extra careful with these breeds.

Symptoms of Heat Stress

Symptoms of heat stress include;

- Excess panting

- Lethargy
- Skin hot to touch
- Excess panting
- Excess salivating
- Sunken eyes

What can you do to help an overheated animal

Immerse in a cool (**not cold**) bath for 5 minutes then bring straight to the Vet clinic.

NOTE: This is a potentially fatal condition which if not treated will result in a shock-like condition & death.

ALWAYS SEEK HELP - DO NOT LEAVE RECOVERY TO CHANCE