



Before you head to the beach or the park to enjoy the warm weather, we'd like to remind you to look out for the health and wellbeing of your coated and feathered companions. Like us, our pets feel the heat if not more. However, unlike us they cannot remove a layer or two when mercury rises!

### Did you know?

- The temperature inside a car can reach over 50 °C after only five minutes, causing heat stress which can lead to death in just six minutes
- Dogs cool down by panting and only have sweat glands on their feet.
- Cats groom themselves frequently to dampen their coats and cool down.
- Rabbits, guinea pigs and birds find it hard to cool down, and are highly susceptible to heat stress.

### WHAT IS HEAT STRESS AND HEATSTROKE?

Heat stress is a very serious condition caused by a significant elevation in body temperature that can escalate quickly into heatstroke and can lead to death. Pets are not efficient at releasing heat and tend to heat up faster than we do. Therefore, it is crucial we maintain vigilance, know the key signs of heat stress and what to do in the event of an emergency.

### SEVEN SIGNS OF HEAT STRESS AND HEATSTROKE

Knowing the signs of heat stress is crucial for early diagnosis and treatment.

1. excessive salivating
2. weakness
3. lethargy
4. shaking
5. dry nose and gums
6. whining
7. constant panting

Extreme cases of heat stress include: dark purple coloured tongue, vomiting, seizures leading to death.

### WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF HEAT STRESS

If your pet is showing any of these signs it is important you seek immediate veterinary advice. It is also advised you move your pet into the shade, wrap them in a damp towel and direct a fan towards them. **Do not** give them a cold bath or shower as it is important they are cooled down in a controlled manner.

### PETS IN VEHICLES

**Never** leave your pet unattended in a vehicle. Within only six minutes, your pet can suffer severe heat stress which can lead to death. Even on overcast days and with windows and/or doors open, the temperature in a vehicle can quickly rise to a dangerous level.

If you find a pet left in a hot car, please call the police on 000.

**TIPS**

- Never leave your pet unattended in a vehicle.
- Always provide cool and clean water and ample shade.
- Do not over-exert or over-exercise your pet during warm weather.
- Keep an eye out on the weather.
- In case of an emergency, keep an easy to access directory of your vet and closest animal hospital.

**KEEPING YOUR PET COOL**

There are a number of effective methods you can use to keep your pet happy and healthy during the warmer months.

- Most dogs love a play in water and never more so when the weather is hot! A small paddle pool with water is a great way to cool your pooch down.
- Most dogs enjoy a good hosing if the weather is particularly hot.
- For cats and senior pets, try a spray bottle or pat them down with a damp towel.
- Always ensure there is plenty of access to cool and clean drinking water. Use more than one bowl or bucket in if you have a large dog, or if he/she has the tendency to knock their bowl over. Large ice blocks placed in water containers will help keep the water cool.
- Make icy treats! They're simple. Just place your dog or cat's favourite treats in to a plastic bowl fill it up with water and freeze. Once frozen, simply slip out the icy treat which will provide your pet with entertainment that will also cool them down.
- Try to stay at home or have someone at home with your pet to keep an eye on how they're going, particularly those who are senior and/or are ill.

**OUTDOOR PETS**

- Ensure your pet has easy access to shade and water throughout the day.
- Be aware of the movement of the sun, particularly during the hours you are not at home, and make sure their housing is in constant shade.
- Exercise dogs early in the morning

or late in the evening. Be mindful not to overexercise overweight or senior dogs. Seek advice from your vet should you have any concerns regarding exercise or diet.

**Please note:** Dogs will dig in the garden to find cool soil and rest their tummies in, so don't be too upset if you find hollowed out sections in a shady part of your yard.

**STAYING INDOORS**

On extremely hot days, it is a good idea to bring your pets indoors.

- Keep the air-conditioning and fan on and/or provide access to the coolest areas of your home — a kitchen, bathroom or laundry with cool tiles are ideal.
- Very young, elderly, overweight or Brachycephalic breeds will benefit the most from being brought indoors. These age groups and breeds tend not to cope well with heat and their condition can deteriorate very quickly.

**OUR SMALLER FRIENDS**

Remember rabbits, guinea pigs and birds find it hard to cool down and are highly susceptible to heat exposure. Smaller pets will enjoy being cooled down with a spray bottle or dampened towel. On extreme weather days if possible move them inside to an air-conditioned house but not directly in front of the unit.



2 Gracie Street  
North Melbourne VIC 3051

**Telephone** 03 9329 2755

**Fax** 03 9326 5293

info@dogshome.com

www.dogshome.com

Twitter: lostdogshome

Facebook: lostdogshome

Since our official opening in 1913, we have been a voice for animals without owners caring for thousands of cats and dogs each year. Pioneers for fair animal laws, we continue to work on the front line to reduce the number of lost, abandoned and stray cats and dogs.

We rely on public support to run services and programs, including: proactive adoption, foster care, behaviour rehabilitation, low cost desexing and microchipping, and the promotion of better pet ownership through education.