

# Fun In The Summer Sun



## Make sure your pet doesn't get overexerted

Though exercise is an important part of keeping your pet at a healthy weight, exercise on hot days can lead to being overheated. Keep walks to a gentle pace and make sure there is plenty of water available. Watch for signs of overexertion such as excessive panting, drooling, weakness or brick red gums. Take a water break in the shade if your pet shows any of these signs. Brachycephalic pets (pets with short faces/noses such as Pugs, Bulldogs and Persians) are especially sensitive to heat.

## Provide plenty of water

Indoors or out, your pet needs access to lots of fresh water at all times, but especially during the summer. Check the water bowl several times a day to be sure it's full. Ice cubes in the water bowl can help keep the water cool for longer periods of time. Bring plenty of water with you if you venture out with your pet. A travel water bowl or dog water bottle are cheap investments that will ensure you and your pet have a great time enjoying the summer weather together.

## Sun lotion is good for you so don't forget your pets

Pets can get sunburned, particularly if they have pink skin and light hair. Sunburn in pets can cause problems similar to those in people, including pain, peeling and skin cancer. Keep in mind that since dogs and cats can get sunburned, they need some fur to protect their skin from sun damage, so consider your pets' skin color and lifestyle when determining how short to trim their fur. Ask your Banfield doctor about pet safe sunscreen that can be applied to areas around the nose and ears.

## Bring your pet inside

Pets shouldn't be left outside unsupervised on hot days, even in the shade. Dark pets especially can overheat very quickly as their coats absorb the sun's rays. Brachycephalic pets, such as Pugs and Bulldogs, have a hard time staying cool because they can't pant efficiently, so they should stay out of the heat. Overweight pets are also more prone to overheating, because their extra layers of fat act as insulation, which traps heat in their bodies and restricts breathing capabilities. Pets can quickly become ill if they overheat, so keep them inside as much as possible.

## Watch out for heatstroke

**Heatstroke is a medical emergency!** Symptoms of heatstroke include:

- Exaggerated panting
- Brick red gums
- Rapid heartbeat
- Unresponsive to commands and surroundings
- High fever
- Vomiting
- Collapse
- Staring/anxious expression
- Warm/dry skin

If you suspect your pet has heatstroke, you must act quickly and calmly. Bring your pet to your Banfield doctor **immediately** or to an emergency hospital if your Banfield is not open. In the meantime, help lower your pet's body temperature by applying towels soaked in cool water or rubbing alcohol to the hairless areas of the pet's body, especially your pet's feet (do not use ice water). Place the pet face near a fan if possible. It is imperative to get the pet to a doctor immediately as permanent organ damage can occur.

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For additional information, please contact your Banfield medical team.

## Head over the side means a dangerous ride

It is extremely dangerous to allow a pet to ride loose in the bed of a truck, which is why it is illegal in most states. An unexpected stop or sudden turn could easily result in a deadly fall out of the vehicle or serious injury. Pets should travel in kennels they are accustomed to that are firmly secured to the vehicle. Another unsafe practice is allowing a pet to travel with her head out of the window. There is risk of irritation to the eyes, as well as injury from random objects such as stray rocks. If you prefer your canine companion riding shotgun, look for dog seat belts, which are available at PetSmart®. These keep your pets safely in their seats.

Enjoy the summer. As always, if you have any questions or concerns about the health of your pet, please contact your Banfield doctor.

## NEVER leave your pet in your automobile

Though it may seem cool outside, even with your windows rolled down and your car parked in the shade, the sun can raise the temperature inside your car to dangerous heights in a matter of minutes. On an 83-degree day, the temperature inside your car can reach 102 degrees in 10 minutes, and 120 degrees in 30 minutes. Leave your pet at home where it's cool and safe.

