



Heat Stress in Dogs

What is Heat Stress?

“Heat Stress” is when your dog’s body temperature becomes too high. A dog’s main method of temperature regulation is panting, but sometimes this is not enough to prevent overheating. Heat stress can have negative, and potentially very serious, consequences.

Causes of Heat Stress

- Outside without access to shade or water
- Exercise in a hot environment
- Leaving your dog in the vehicle

Is my dog at risk?

Any dog can suffer from heat stress. However, particular risk factors include:

- Very young or old dogs
- Long or thick coats
- Overweight
- Brachycephalic breeds (short flat faces)

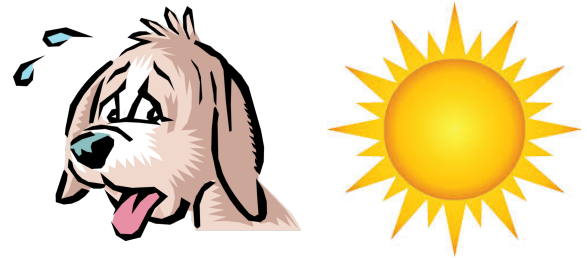
Signs to watch for

Early Signs – dog trying to regulate their body temperature:

- Excessive panting
- Seeking out shade
- Seeking out water
- Anxious

Late Signs – dog can’t regulate their temperature (i.e. heat stroke - this is an **EMERGENCY**):

- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Bright red or blue tongue and gums
- Severe lethargy or collapse
- Seizures



Treatment

Early Signs

- Move your dog to a cool environment
- Offer them water
- Pour cool (not ice cold) water over their body

Late Signs

- Seek veterinary care immediately!!
- Your vet will try to cool the dog in a controlled manner, and start supportive therapy
- It is possible to have lasting organ damage once heat stroke has occurred

Prevention is KEY

- **DO NOT leave your dog in the vehicle unattended.** Plan ahead!
- Exercise your dog in the morning and evening to avoid peak heat
- Have shade and water available to dogs outside
- Try swimming! This is excellent exercise and helps your dog stay cool at the same time.

