

HYPERTHERMIA

(HEAT STROKE, HEAT PROSTRATION)

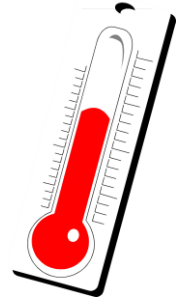


The hot days of summer are here, and although they are often called the “dog days”, they can be unfriendly to our canine friends. This is the time of year when veterinary clinics start seeing an increase in cases of heat stroke. Heat stroke is an increased body temperature caused by environmental conditions.

Hyperthermia can be a life-threatening condition and does require immediate treatment. A dog’s normal temperature is 100 to 102 degrees Fahrenheit, and any time the body temperature exceeds 105 degrees Fahrenheit, a true emergency exists. Heat stroke generally occurs in hot summer weather when dogs are left with inadequate ventilation in hot areas.

These conditions include:

1. When an animal is left in a closed vehicle on a warm day (as low as 70 degrees Fahrenheit).
A recent study from Stanford University Medical Center found the temperature within a vehicle may increase by an average of 40 degrees Fahrenheit within ONE hour regardless of outside temperature.
2. When an animal is left outdoors in hot/humid conditions without adequate shade.
3. Animals that are exercised in hot, humid weather.



Other predisposing factors include obesity and diseases affecting a pet’s airway, such as brachycephalic (short-nose) syndrome. Brachycephalic breeds include Pugs, Bulldogs, Pekingese, Lhasa apso, Shih tzu, Boston terriers, etc. These dogs generally have smaller airways than their long-nosed relatives, smaller nostrils, and extra tissue in the back of the throat that prevents adequate movement of air.

Initially the pet appears distressed, will pant excessively and become restless. As the hyperthermia progresses, the pet may drool large amounts of saliva from the nose and/or the mouth. The pet may become unsteady on his feet. You may notice the gums turning bright red, or even blue or purple in color which indicates inadequate oxygen. Eventually the breathing becomes loud and raspy, then many dogs will vomit, have severe explosive diarrhea and collapse.



WHAT TO DO: Remove your pet from the environment where the hyperthermia occurred.

Move your pet to a shaded and cool environment, and direct a fan on her.

If possible, determine rectal temperature and record it.

Begin to cool the body by placing cool, wet towels over the back of the neck, in the armpits, and in the groin region. You may also wet the ear flaps and paws with cool water.

Directing a fan on these wetted areas will help to speed evaporative cooling.

Transport to the closest veterinary facility immediately.

WHAT NOT TO DO: Do not use ice or ice water for cooling.

Do not overcool the pet.

Most pets with hyperthermia have body temperatures greater than 105° F, and a reasonable goal of cooling is to reduce your pet's body temperature to 102.5-103° F while transporting her to the closest veterinary facility.

Do not attempt to force water into your pet's mouth, but you may have fresh cool water ready to offer should your pet be alert and show an interest in drinking.

Do not leave your pet unattended for any length of time.

Keep your pets cool this summer by providing plenty of shade, fresh cool water, and bring them into the air conditioning if possible on hot humid days. Remember, when there is a posted heat advisory for people, the same applies to your pets.

VISIT US ONLINE!!

Please visit our new website at www.riverridgevets.com for a virtual tour, learn about our new facility, meet the doctors, find coupons and specials, and contact us by email! The site is being continuously updated and will have added new features so check back often-in fact bookmark us!

You can also find us on Facebook where you can view pet pictures, enter contests and chat with staff and other clients. We also post important updates such as weather closings, dog training schedules and more!



273 IL Rt 2 Dixon, IL 61021

Phone# 815-288-3394

staff@riverridgevets.com

www.riverridgevets.com

www.facebook.com/riverridgeanimalhospital