

# HEAT STROKE



An emergency that requires immediate owner intervention and medical treatment.

## The following signs may indicate heat stroke in a pet

- Increased rectal temperature
- Anxiety
- Vigorous panting
- Dark red gums
- Dry mucus membranes (specifically the gums)
- Lying down and unwilling (or unable) to get up
- Collapse and/or loss of consciousness
- Dizziness or disorientation

## Prevention

- Never leave your pet alone in the car on a warm day, regardless of whether the windows are open. Even if the weather outside is not extremely hot, the inside of the car acts like an oven—temperatures can rise to dangerously high levels in a matter of minutes.
- Avoid vigorous exercise on warm days. When outside, opt for shady areas.
- Keep fresh cool water available at all times.
- Provide shade and cool water to pets living outdoors.
- Do not expose pets with airway disease, heart disease or impaired breathing to prolonged heat.
- Certain types of pets are more sensitive to heat—especially overweight and short-nosed breeds such as Persians, Himalayans, Pugs and Bulldogs. Use extreme caution when these pets are exposed to heat.

## Action steps if you suspect heat stroke in your pet

- Remove your pet from the hot area.
- Call your veterinarian immediately.
- Lower your pet's temperature by wetting him/her thoroughly with room temperature water, then increase air movement around him/her with a fan.
- When the rectal temperature drops to 103.5°F, stop all cooling efforts.

**CAUTION:** Using very cold water or cold water-soaked blankets can actually be counterproductive. Cooling too quickly and especially allowing your pet's body temperature to become too low can cause other life-threatening medical conditions.

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