

# Preventing Paw Problems in the Summer Heat

**A**s summer kicks into full swing, and people start applying protection from the sun, we need to consider our furry friends. Our pets are vulnerable during this time to not only overheating, but also to burns from walking on hot surfaces.

## How to Detect if Your Pet's Paws have been Burned

- Reluctance to move after walking on a hot surface
- Painful feet and paws when touched
- Lameness (holding one leg up or leaning to one side)
- In Severe Cases
  - Bleeding
  - Watery or bloody discharge
  - Peeling of the pads
  - Cracking/peeling of the pad to expose the soft tissue

## Common Surfaces that Retain Heat

- Pool Decks
- Asphalt Pavement
- Cement
- Sand
- Hard-Packed Ground (less commonly)

## What to Do

- Remove your pet from the hot surface
- Apply a cold (but not icy) compress
- Seek veterinary care immediately

## Prevention

- Check the surface - If it is hot on your hands or bare feet, it is too hot for your pet
- Try to walk on grass, or only walk in the mornings and/or evenings when hot surfaces are cooler and less likely to retain heat
- Try to minimize the length of time that your pet walks on hot surfaces
- Utilize booties if your pet must be on hot surfaces
- Avoid thick creams, ointments, and lotions that can trap heat in the paw

