

Summer Safety Tips

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With summer well on its way, Phoenix Animal Rescue would like to provide some tips to help you keep your dog safe and healthy over the warm, summer months.

Exercise – Like most people, dogs tend to avoid the outdoors during cold winter months. This means that they are most likely more out-of-shape compared to normal, so it is important to take precaution when getting them in the habit of being active again. Start your dog out slow to avoid muscle sprains. Biking, walking, hiking and swimming are all great ways to ease your dogs into being active again. Start out slow and gradually increase the time, distance and intensity of the exercise.

It is also important to remember that your dog is exercising with a fur coat! Avoid excessive exercising during the hot afternoon hours. Rather, try to get exercise in the cool mornings or late evening hours. It will be much more comfortable for both you and your pet. Also, hot pavement can burn your dog's paw pads, so stick to the grass or dirt when possible.

Plenty of water is especially important during hot weather, and even more important during hot-weather exercise! Encourage your dog to drink lots of water to avoid dehydration. Carrying a thermos filled with cold water is a necessary precaution. Most importantly, watch your dog for signs of exhaustion or overheating. If he is dragging his paws more than usual, and can't seem to keep up, slow down


and give him a second to rest and have some water. When possible, let your dog enjoy a nice swim in a pool or pond.

Make sure to check your dog's paws for cuts, bruises and foreign objects after exercise.

Heat Stroke – Heat Stroke is a serious, and potentially fatal condition. To avoid your pet getting heat stroke, never leave your dog in the vehicle during warm weather. Even if you are parked in a shady spot, or you leave the windows cracked, the interior of your vehicle can quickly become dangerously high. If you need to run errands that require you to leave your vehicle, leave your dog at home. Also, avoid exercise during the hottest times of day.

Signs of heat stroke may include heavy breathing, panting, staggering and even loss of consciousness. If you suspect your dog is suffering from heat stroke, immediately move him into a shady area and try to bring his body temperature down by placing him in cool water, if possible. Seek medical attention for your pet as soon as possible.

Here are some of the **top safety tips from the ASPCA**, for keeping your pet safe and cool during summer months:

 Schedule a early summer check-up at your vet – include a test for heartworm if your dog is not on year-round preventative. Also, if you are not already partaking in flea and tick control, ask your doctor to recommend a safe

- and effective option for your pet.
- ✚ Never leave your pet alone in a vehicle.
 - ✚ Carry a thermos filled with cold, fresh water when traveling with your pet.
 - ✚ Schedule your outdoor-playtime in the early morning or late evening when it is cooler, but never after a meal, or when the weather is humid.
 - ✚ Don't leave your dog standing on hot asphalt – sensitive paw pads can burn easily.
 - ✚ Avoid beached unless you can guarantee a shaded spot and plenty of fresh water for your pet.
 - ✚ Keep your pet inside during the hottest times of day.
 - ✚ Help prevent summer skin problem with good grooming,

especially for dogs with heavy coats. A haircut down to about one-inch of hair will help prevent overheating, but don't go shorter than that because then your dog could be more prone to sunburn.

- ✚ Only use sunscreen and insect repellents that are specifically for use on animals. Ingestions of human sunscreens may cause drooling, diarrhea, dehydration and lethargy. The misuse of insect repellent that contains DEET may cause neurological problems for your pet.

*Source: The American Society for
the Prevention of Cruelty to
Animals.*