



## Reducing Heat Stress in dogs

Please be aware that hot weather can be lethal to dogs. Heat stress can cause strokes and shut down of major organs, killing a dog in a very short time.

Following are some tips to help your dog remain cool throughout the summer months.

- Never walk your dog in hot weather. Dogs do not sweat and can overheat very quickly. Even 30 degrees can be too hot for a vigorous walk.
- Take your shoes off and stand on the footpath. If it feels too hot for your feet, it can damage the pads of your dog. Take him for a swim instead if possible.
- If you are caught out in the heat, take precautions to keep your dog cool –
  - Wet the feet and underbelly only of your dog. Wetting them all over is not effective in keeping them cool and can have the opposite effect.
  - Ensure the dog has access to cool water.
  - Place him in the shade.
  - Don't make him do any strenuous exercise. He will overheat.
- Never leave them in a car. The temperature is way too high for them to tolerate.
- Don't put them in the back of a ute unless you have carpet to stop their pads being burnt. The ute tray can become extremely hot. Think before you take them anywhere in a car and ensure they are not exposed to hot surfaces or hot cars.
- If your dog becomes extremely distressed in the heat, use a hose and thoroughly soak the dog (not just wet, but soaking). Give water and keep the dog quiet and cool. Get them to a vet if they are stressed.
- It doesn't have to be forty degrees outside before a dog can become stressed. Lack of shade and water can make a thirty degree day almost unbearable for your dog. On extremely hot days the footpath doesn't cool down at night, so taking them for a walk late in the day may not help. You

are better off not exercising your dog for a few days, or seeking an alternative like swimming, rather than risk their life.

- On hot days, put food treats in ice blocks to give them something cold and keep them occupied. Put ice in their water. Water bowls become hot very quickly outside. Change the water if needed during the day.
- Long coated dogs can be cooler than short coated dogs if the coat is brushed out regularly. The air becomes trapped in the coat and acts as a coolant. A lot of dogs have no hope of becoming cool if their coats are not brushed to remove dead hair. This also applies to short coated dogs.
- Be sensible and consider leaving your dog at home where they are cool, rather than take them with you on a hot day.
- Remember to look for signs of heat stress, excessive panting, lethargy, fatigue and collapse. *Please* don't let them suffer.