

## Pet owners should take extra precautions during the summer <sup>9</sup>

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The summer months often lend themselves to outdoor activities, including large gatherings and barbecues. With an increased number of people and the loud volume that can accompany these events, pets can easily become stressed or frightened.

Similar to the precautions humans take to avoid heat stroke and over-exposure to the sun during these hot months, it is important

to protect pets from many of the same threats.

When bringing pets outdoors for exercise or play time during the high temperatures of the summer months, limit their time spent in the sun. Animals with shorter coats risk the chance of getting sunburned, and those with longer hair can easily overheat. Also, when walking pets, be especially cautious of the temperature of cement and asphalt that can often be hot enough to burn the pads or

paws of your animal.

It is not only direct sunlight that pet owners should be conscious of. Leaving animals in an unattended car can be a fatal mistake.

While regular heartworm prevention should be administered year round, fleas, ticks and mosquitoes are more prevalent during these warmer months, increasing the importance of maintaining heartworm medicine for both your canine and feline companions.

We also associate hurricane season, which began June 1, with the summer. When weather becomes frightening, your pet can become stressed due to storms.

If an evacuation were necessary, it is vital to have an emergency plan in place for your whole family - including your pets.

Tips for pet safety this summer:

- Limit outdoor activities and exercise time.
- Provide plenty of fresh,

cool water.

• Maintain proper grooming - shorter hair is best to avoid heat exhaustion.

• Be aware that arthritic animals will experience more joint problems in summer heat.

• Large crowds and loud noises, such as fireworks, can frighten animals and cause stress.

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