

Summer care tips for your pet

Review these tips to keep pets safe and healthy during the spring and summer seasons.

Weather

- Provide plenty of fresh **drinking water** at all times.
- Keep your pet's kennel well-ventilated and positioned near a well-shaded area where your pet can avoid midday **sun and heat**.
- Avoid excessive **exercise** during hot weather. Over-exertion can cause heat stress or stroke. Safe outdoor temperatures for pets vary by breed and size. Ask your veterinarian for a recommendation specific to your pet.

Warning: If you suspect **heat stress or stroke** (e.g., collapse, extremely heavy panting, excessive drooling), wet your pet thoroughly with cool (not cold) water by immersion or spray your pet with a garden hose and call your veterinarian immediately.

Skin and body

- Keep your pet well-groomed. Long **hair** and hair mats can decrease your pet's ability to keep cool and contribute to skin disease. So regularly brush your pet and trim hair as needed.
- Vaccinate your pet against infectious **diseases** (e.g., canine parvovirus or feline leukemia). Pets usually have more contact with other animals during warmer months and disease can spread more easily.

Parasite prevention

- Use monthly flea, tick, and heartworm preventives. Pets should take these preventives year-round. Remember, it's often easier and cheaper to prevent **parasites** than treat them when a pet's infested or infected. Take your pet for fecal exams for internal parasites at least yearly.

To reduce pets' access to parasites and discourage parasite breeding, keep your yard clean of feces, dump any standing water—even in watering cans or flower pot saucers—clean up leaf litter, and trim bushes and trees.

Toxic substances

- The **poisons** that kill common pests, like rodents, snails, and slugs, are lethal to pets, too, if consumed. So limit your pet's access to places where these poisons are stored in and around your home.
- Lawn **herbicides** can also poison pets, so keep your pet out of the yard while spraying herbicides and off the grass for three days afterward. Washing pets' paws thoroughly with soap and cool water before coming back inside will help remove herbicidal residue.

Motor vehicles

- The **temperature** inside a car can easily climb to 120 degrees when a vehicle is parked in the summer sun. *Never* leave your pet unattended in a vehicle.