

# Heatstroke prevention

Dogs don't sweat – except to a minor degree through their foot pads – so they can't tolerate high environmental temperatures. Dogs use panting as a way to exchange warm air for cool air. But when the air temperature is close to the dog's body temperature, cooling by panting is not an efficient process. This is when heatstroke can occur.

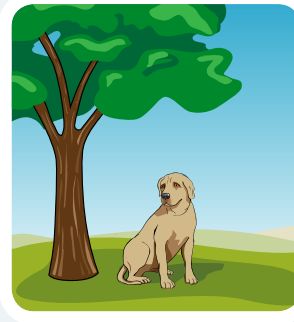
## Heatstroke signs



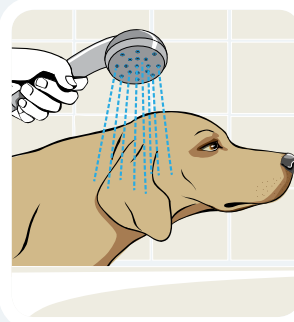
### Symptoms

- Increased heart rate
- Excessive panting
- Increased salivation
- Bright red tongue
- Red or pale gums
- Thick, sticky saliva
- Depression
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea

## Heatstroke first aid

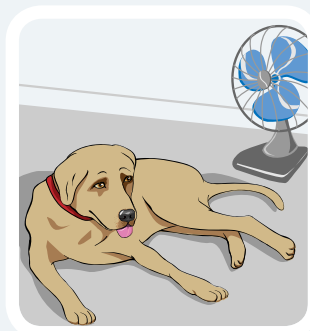


- **Remove dog from heat immediately** – preferably into an air conditioned building or, at the very least, into the shade.
- **Wetting down the area around your dog** can also help to lower the ambient temperature.



- **Lower temperature** by wetting with cool but not chilled water and setting up a circulating fan.
- **Check rectal temperature** every five minutes using a digital thermometer and continue cooling process until temperature drops to around 39°.
- **Caution:** cooling too quickly can cause complications.

## Prevention



- **Don't leave your dog in a car** unattended at any time.
- **Restrict exercise activity** in hot weather.
- **Avoid hot sand, concrete or asphalt areas** where heat is reflected and there is no access to shade.
- **Place a circulating fan near your dog** to cool him down.



- Always give your dog **access to drinking water**.
- Ensure outside dogs have **access to shade**.
- Wetting down your dog with **cool water** or allowing him to swim can help maintain a normal body temperature.

## You should always see a vet



- Even if your dog appears to be recovering, **take him to your vet** as soon as possible. He should still be examined since he may be dehydrated or have other complications.
- **Caution:** if your dog is displaying severe signs of heat distress, get him to the vet as quickly as you can.

In most instances, pet heatstroke is preventable. By using common sense and taking some simple precautions, your dog can enjoy his normal outdoor activities. Please ensure your pet stays cool in hot weather, never leave him in a car alone and always provide him with adequate water and shelter from the sun.



**Please note:** this fact sheet provides general information and should not act as a substitute for contacting your vet.