

## Heatstroke In Dogs

### Overview

- Heatstroke is a common problem for dogs during the summer – even in the UK!
- Exercising in heat is the most common cause, closely followed by hot cars.
- Heatstroke can develop very quickly, cause organ failure and even death.
- Overweight dogs, dogs with thick fur, and flat-faced dogs such as Pugs and Bulldogs are most at risk.
- If you see symptoms of heatstroke in your dog, start cooling them and take them to the vet immediately.

### First aid for heatstroke

### What is heatstroke?



Heatstroke is when the body gets too hot and core body temperature rises above the normal 38.6°C (101.5°F). If your dog's temperature stays too high for too long, they will become seriously unwell, their organs will start to fail and they could even die. The two most common heatstroke triggers are exercising on a hot day and being trapped in a hot space (such as a car or conservatory).

As the world gets hotter, and we experience more unpredictable weather, we need to take every precaution to keep our pets safe on hot days. Extra care should be taken with overweight dogs, young dogs, flat faced breeds, and dogs with thick fur.

## Signs

Signs of heatstroke in dogs include:

- Excessive panting
- Foaming at the mouth
- Bright red gums
- Shaking
- Weakness and [collapse](#)
- Confusion
- [Vomiting](#) and [diarrhoea](#)
- [Seizures](#)
- Death

## When to contact your vet

If your dog is showing signs of heatstroke, [give first aid](#) and call your vet immediately. **Remember, never use very cold water or ice to cool your dog down as it could cause them to go into shock.**

### First aid for heatstroke

## Treatment

The quicker your dog receives treatment from a vet, the better their outlook. Your vet will try to reduce their body temperature and may need to put them on a drip. If your dog doesn't don't recover quickly, they may also run some blood tests to check your dog's organs.

Your dog will be monitored very closely until they start to recover. Once they are stable will be sent home for monitoring. You will need to keep a close eye on them for 24-48 hours and let your vet know if they deteriorate or develop any unexpected symptoms such as confusion, vomiting, diarrhoea or a reduced appetite.

## Outlook

If your dog has a mild case of heatstroke, and they receive treatment quickly, they are likely to make a full recovery. However, if they have a serious case of heatstroke, or treatment is delayed, they could suffer organ damage and even die.

## Prevention



- Never leave your dog in a hot car/shed/conservatory.
- Always make sure your dog has access to shade and water.
- Don't exercise your dog in the heat of the day.
- Don't let your dog get overweight.
- If your dog has a heavy coat, have them clipped to keep them comfortable and safe.
- Cool your dog down with cool (not freezing cold) water if they are getting hot.

## Cost

Emergency treatment for a poorly pet can cost hundreds of pounds, especially if they need hospital treatment for several days. Consider insuring your dog as soon as you get them, before any problems start. This will ensure you have all the support you need to care for them.

**Am I eligible for PDSA veterinary treatment?**

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