

First aid for heat stroke

Overview

- Heatstroke is a life-threatening emergency.
- Common signs including panting, trouble breathing and collapse/fainting.
- It is important to get help from a vet ASAP if you think your pet may have heatstroke.

What to do if you think your pet has heat stroke:



Step one: **Check them**

- Check your pet for the common signs of heatstroke such as excessive panting, trouble breathing and collapse.
- Avoid stressing your pet by staying calm and using a quiet voice to sooth them.
- If you suspect your pet has heatstroke, phone your vets and start cooling them immediately (step two).

Step two: **Cool them**

- **Never use ice or very cold water to cool your dog – this could cause shock.**

- Move your pet into a cool space that is out of direct sunlight. If they are large, you may need to use a towel or blanket to move them.
- Use a fan or air-conditioning to cool the air around them.
- Give them cool (not freezing cold) water to drink.
- Put them on top of a wet towel to start cooling them.
- Slowly wet their feet, ears and fur.
- Once your pet starts to cool down you can pour **cool** water over their body.

Step three: **Call your vet**

- Call your vet for advice as soon as you have moved your pet into a cool area and started cooling them down
- If your pet is struggling to breathe, call your vet for advice immediately.
- Transport your pet (ideally in an air-conditioned vehicle) and continue cooling them on the journey.

Coronavirus: Always call before arriving at your veterinary practice, during the current COVID-19 crisis, your vet will be operating a limited service and may not have staff at all sites.

More information

Read our article on for more information about heatstroke in dogs.

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