



Walking dogs in hot weather could end in tragedy, warn vets

-Only 50% of dogs with heat stroke will survive-



EMERGENCY vets have issued a plea to dog owners to avoid exercising their pets during the hottest part of the day, warning the average survival rate of a dog diagnosed with heat stroke is only 50%.

[Vets Now](#), which has emergency out-of-hours clinics and 24/7 pet emergency hospitals up and down the country, sees one of its busiest times when the weather warms up, with vets seeing a big increase in heat stroke admissions over the summer months.

Heat stroke is a major factor to consider when out and about in the heat and sunshine with your dog, and it takes only a small 2°C body temperature increase for heat stroke to kick in.

The illness occurs when dogs are no longer able to self-regulate and keep their temperature down, according to Vets Now, the UK's leading provider of pet emergency veterinary care.

Dr Laura Playforth, head of veterinary standards at Vets Now said: "There are two types of heat stroke - exertional and non-exertional.

"The first occurs during exercise and is much more common on hot sunny days when dogs haven't had a chance to acclimatise to the sudden rise in heat. The second type is when a dog is exposed to a notable rise in temperature but doesn't have access to the ventilation, or drinking water, to keep themselves cool. This typically occurs in a parked car, a garden with no shade, or a very hot room.

"All dogs can overheat if left without water and outside for too long, so on hot summer days it's best to walk your dog in the morning or evening when it's cooler.

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“And ensure drinking water and a cool, shaded spot is always available. It’s a good idea to clip hair if you have a longer-haired breed, and spray your dog with cool water as much as possible. Remember to never leave your dog in a hot car or a warm room.”

Here are the warning signs to look out for:

- Faster, heavier panting
- Barking, whining or signs of agitation
- Excessive thirst
- Excessive drooling
- Increased pulse and heartbeat
- Dark-coloured (red or purple) gums or tongue
- Glassy eyes
- Elevated body temperature of 40C (104F) and up
- Staggering, weakness or collapse
- Seizures
- Unconsciousness

With bright, sunny days luring people and their pets out into the great outdoors, the expert team of vets and nurses also see more road traffic accidents, cat fights, dog bites and allergic reactions over the summer.

Laura added: “We naturally venture into the great outdoors more frequently during summer. It’s only fair that our pets come with us too, to get some exercise and fresh air. However, heat isn’t the only problem pets have to deal with over the summer months. From burns, to strong waves, and parasites, there are a number of hazards that should be considered.

“It’s essential you’re aware of what to do when faced with a pet emergency, especially when it’s out of hours or your local vet may be closed at the weekends or bank holidays.”

If you think your dog is suffering from heat stroke, contact your vet as soon as possible, or find your nearest [Vets Now pet emergency clinic or Vets Now 24/7 hospital](#).

Note to editor, to embed a Vets Now infographic onto your site FOC, visit: <https://www.vets-now.com/summer/dog-panting-and-restless-heat-stroke-signs/>



Vets Now's top-7 summer dangers that could make your dog ill

If you'd rather avoid a trip to one of Vets Now's out-of-hours pet emergency clinics or 24/7 hospitals this summer then beware of these common dangers:

1. Hot Weather

Danger: Exercising your dog too much or leaving them in the car, conservatory or an enclosed space after a sudden rise in temperature can lead to potentially fatal heat stroke.

How to avoid: Never walk your dog during the hottest parts of the day, and never leave them in a confined space for any length of time.

2. Plants and flowers

Danger: Several flowers and plants that are popular in the summer are potentially toxic to dogs, including poppies, clematis, peony, foxglove, geranium, chrysanthemum, oleander and yew.

How to avoid: If you're not sure whether your plants are safe, keep a close eye on your dog in the garden and around house plants.

3. Rat poison

Danger: Rodenticide is designed to taste nice to rats but, unfortunately, dogs also like it for the same reason. Some types can cause severe internal bleeding as well as vomiting, fits and changes in body temperature.

How to avoid: If you have a serious vermin problem, opt for a pet-friendly option to get rid of it

4. Barbecues

Danger: In the summer, barbeque-related incidents — such as swallowing kebab skewers, eating cooked bones, food poisoning, and burn injuries — account for a surprisingly large number of admissions to Vets Now clinics.

How to avoid: Always keep raw and cooked barbeque food out of reach and make sure your dog is under supervision once the barbeque has been lit

5. Compost and cocoa mulch

Danger: Used to fertilise gardens, these are both potentially lethal for dogs. Compost is full of highly toxic mould while cocoa mulch contains poisonous theobromine.

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How to avoid: Make sure compost bins are kept well out of reach and only ever use cocoa mulch sparingly, if at all.

6. Weed killer

Danger: Many of the herbicides gardeners use to kill weeds and unwanted plants are dangerous if swallowed, licked or even brushed against.

How to avoid: Read the instructions carefully and don't use if there's a potential risk

7. Fish Hooks

Danger: Dogs are often tempted to swallow the shiny lure and tasty bait that's attached to fish hooks. But these can cause nasty injuries if embedded in the mouth, stomach or paws.

How to avoid: Fish hooks are often discarded by inconsiderate anglers so be on your guard in areas where fishing is popular.

If you're worried your dog is sick or injured, contact your vet as soon as possible, or find your nearest [Vets Now pet emergency clinic or Vets Now 24/7 hospital](#).

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For media: For free-to-use video content, visit <https://www.vets-now.com/summer/> please backlink Vets Now in return. Please also see the attached infographic, which can also be used FOC.

For additional expert comment, product enquires, further information or high-resolution images, please contact:

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Vets Now notes to editor:

- Vets Now was established in 2001 and is the leading provider of emergency veterinary care for companion animals in the UK.
- With 24/7 Pet Emergency Hospitals in Glasgow, Manchester and Swindon, and 59 out-of-hours clinics nationwide, Vets Now is committed to delivering a responsive emergency and critical care service for cats, dogs and other small animals.

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- Vets Now also partners with more than 1,400 veterinary practices across the UK to provide their clients with a seamless out-of-hours emergency care service.
- Vets Now employs over 1000 staff.
- Vets Now remains at the forefront of emergency veterinary care through its commitment to clinical excellence and training, employing many of the country's top Emergency & Critical Care Specialists.