

# Heat Stroke

**An emergency that requires immediate owner intervention and medical treatment.**

The following signs may indicate heat stroke in a dog

- Increased rectal temperature
- Anxiety
- Vigorous panting
- Dark red gums
- Dry mucus membranes (specifically the gums)
- Lying down and unwilling (or unable) to get up
- Collapse and/or loss of consciousness
- Dizziness or disorientation

## Prevention

- NEVER leave your dog alone in the car on a warm day, regardless of whether the windows are open. Even if the weather outside is not extremely hot, the inside of the car acts like an oven—temperatures can rise to dangerously high levels in a matter of minutes.
- Avoid vigorous exercise on warm days. When outside, opt for shady areas.
- Keep fresh cool water available at all times.
- Provide shade and cool water to dogs living in outdoor runs.

- Do not expose dogs with airway disease, heart disease or impaired breathing to prolonged heat.
- Certain types of dogs are more sensitive to heat—especially obese dogs and short-nosed breeds such as Pugs and Bulldogs. Use extreme caution when these dogs are exposed to heat.

## Action steps if you suspect heat stroke in your dog

- Remove your pet from the hot area.
- Call your veterinarian immediately.
- Lower your pet's temperature by wetting him thoroughly with room temperature water, then increase air movement around him with a fan.
- When the rectal temperature drops to 103.5°F, stop all cooling efforts.  
CAUTION: Using very cold water or cold water-soaked blankets can actually be counterproductive. Cooling too quickly and especially allowing your pet's body temperature to become too low can cause other life-threatening medical conditions.

