

Heat Stroke

Heatstroke occurs when normal body mechanisms cannot keep the body's temperature in a safe range. Animals don't have the efficient cooling system (like humans who sweat) and are overheated easily. A dog with moderate heatstroke (body temperature 104-106 F) can recover within an hour if given prompt first aid. Allow the dog to drink ample cool water and walk around. Severe heat stroke ≥ 106 F) can be deadly and immediate veterinary assistance is needed. Signs of heatstroke include; a bright red tongue, red or pale gums, thick sticky saliva, rapid panting, weakness, imbalance, vomiting, diarrhea and shock. In case of severe heatstroke, transport your dog to the veterinarian immediately. If you are not close to the veterinarian hospital and your dog is conscious, lower the temperature to at least 106 F before going to the vet. Submerging in water is recommended. If limited water is available, apply water to the belly area, groin, behind the ears, the neck and feet. Check the temperature every 5-10 minutes. Stop the cooling process once the temperature reaches 103 F. Do not allow the temperature to drop further. Keep the dog comfortable. You may need to put a blanket or towel over the dog.

Dogs with moderate heatstroke often recover without complicating health problems. Severe heatstroke can cause organ damage that might need ongoing care, such as a special diet prescribed by your veterinarian. Dogs who suffer from heatstroke once, increase their risk for getting it again and steps must be taken to prevent heatstroke on humid days. Keep a rectal thermometer (digital or glass) in your first aid kit and use it when is doubt.

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