

# SUN, SAND, SURF



If your dog loves a trip to the beach as much as you do, here are some things to keep in mind.



## SUN

Dogs and cats have few sweat glands, and their body temperatures can quickly rise to a dangerous level if they are left in the heat with no way to cool off. A pet with heat stroke requires prompt treatment, so you must be able to recognize the following signs:

- **Body temperature above 103°F**
- **Excessive panting**
- **Dry or sticky tongue or gums**
- **Dark or bright red tongue or gums**
- **Staggering or stumbling when trying to walk**
- **Seizures**
- **Unresponsiveness**

Just because a pet is playing in the water, or laying in the shade, doesn't mean he isn't at risk of heat stroke. If you suspect your pet has heat stroke, seek veterinary care immediately as time is of the essence. You can help your pet cool down by offering ice cubes to lick and placing wet cloths on the feet and around the head. Never put your pet in cold water or cool below 103°F. This can cause hypothermia and dangerous blood pressure changes.

And remember to **never** leave your pet in a car during the summer months with the windows rolled up or even cracked just a little. The temperature inside the vehicle can climb to dangerous levels, resulting in death.



## SAND

**Ingestion** – some dogs like to eat sand, and others ingest it by accident while digging in it or when picking up balls and toys. If your dog eats too much, the sand can cause a blockage in the intestinal tract which is called sand impaction. Symptoms include abdominal pain, vomiting, and dehydration and requires immediate veterinary attention. Other ingestion hazards found in the sand include jelly fish, broken glass, fish hooks, shells, and garbage.

**Hot sand** – sand can heat up to dangerous temperatures, causing burns to your dog's paw pads. Avoid having your pet walk on hot sand, and monitor your pet's paw pads for blisters and swelling, as well as for cuts that may come from walking on shells and broken glass.



## SURF

**Salt water** – this contains sodium chloride, which can cause severe dehydration, kidney damage, brain swelling, seizures, and death. As little as two to three cups of salt water can be toxic for a large dog, and less than a gallon can cause death. Toxicity signs can appear from 30 minutes to several hours after ingestion, and may include vomiting, diarrhea, lack of coordination, disorientation, seizures, and unresponsiveness. Please note that dogs consume salt water when playing with toys in the water, and while swimming with their mouths open. Ingestion doesn't always happen directly from a pet taking a drink. If you think your pet may have consumed salt water, seek veterinary care immediately.

**Drowning** – many dogs love to swim, but some tire more easily than others. Make sure your pet wears a life jacket made specifically for animals.

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