

# HEATSTROKE

Pets can overheat in an enclosed car in less than 5 minutes in Florida.

Pets can also overheat while jogging or even walking, especially if pets are overweight, have metabolic diseases, or have thick or dark hair coats. Short nosed animals (pugs, bulldogs, etc.) are especially susceptible to heatstroke.

The first signs of heatstroke are panting and collapse. Rectal temperatures can exceed 105 degrees. Pets can eventually go into shock, begin bleeding into skin or gums, and can die quickly.

If you feel that your pet may be a victim of heatstroke, it is important first to confirm heatstroke by taking a rectal temperature. If the temperature exceeds 104 degrees, it is then important to cool your animal with cool water, not ice cold, as cooling too quickly can cause temperatures to drop too low and too fast. This can worsen the later stages of heatstroke and may even make the pet more susceptible to bleeding and death.

Frequent rechecking of the rectal temperature is important (i.e. every 1-2 minutes). Once rectal temperatures reach 103 - 103.5 degrees, cooling measures can be stopped.

At this time it is important to transport the pet to your veterinarian or if after hours, an emergency clinic for additional treatment for the later stages of heatstroke.

Remember, just because you have cooled your pet down does not mean that the later stages of heatstroke (bleeding, bruising, collapse and death) will not become evident hours later.

*Provided as a public service by  
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