

Dogs, cats and summer: make sure they get along

ISABEL HAYES

Gordon Veterinary Hospital's Dr Gretta Howard has advice on how to keep your pet safe and healthy during the hot summer months.

SUMMER is a great time to enjoy the warm weather with your pet, but beware of a few dangers.

HEAT STROKE

Dogs enjoy exercising but sometimes don't know when to stop and can overdo it, leading to hyperthermia or heat stroke. Over-exertion, particularly in hot weather, can lead to an increased temperature, collapse, organ damage and even death. Breeds with brachycephalic features (flat face and narrowed airways), like pugs and bulldogs, are especially prone. To avoid trouble, exercise in morning and dusk, take water

and rest frequently if it is hot.

NOISE PHOBIA

New Year's Eve might be over, but Australia Day festivities often use fireworks. Pets hear noises we can't hear so fireworks are extremely distressing for some. If you're not going to be home when fireworks are on, arrange for your dog or cat to be booked into a boarding kennel. Storms can also be a source of anxiety. Ensure your yard is secure, as animals trying to escape can be injured.

BARBECUES

Summer is when we fire up the barbecue, but don't feed your dog any spare snags. They don't tolerate fat like we do and can get pancreatitis, a painful inflammatory disease.

TICKS

The paralysis tick is prevalent around the North Shore so don't forget to use a tick preventative

and check your pet daily for ticks. Symptoms include a change in voice (hoarse or loss of bark or meow), breathing difficulties and mild weakness.

LOST OR ABANDONED

Dogs may escape from their yard during thunderstorms or fireworks. Stray animals are usually owned by someone, so don't assume they are abandoned.

- Check for a tag on the collar with a phone number and try contacting the owner before taking them to the vet or pound;
- If there is no tag, then take the dog or cat to a vet or pound for microchip scanning so the owner can be contacted;
- If there is no microchip, then the pet should be driven to the pound. If this is not possible, call a council ranger; and
- Always be careful when approaching stray animals. They may be nervous or injured, and therefore inclined to bite.



COOL CATS: Pets should be given plenty of shade and water.

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