

Summer is Here!

With this beautiful weather, we are all having BBQ's and fun in the sun and sea. But please be careful and think about your pets during this time of year as they don't always feel the same

Heat can be a real killer for many pets. Avoid exercising pets during the heat of the day, particularly with older or overweight animals and short nosed breeds e.g. Pugs, Bulldogs, Boston Terriers & Boxers who struggle to pant effectively, stick to early morning walks or late evenings (ensure fresh clean water is always available).

Sunburn can be really problematic for some pets – cats in particular. Cats are natural sun lovers and they enjoy to sunbathe, but if your pet has a white nose and ear tips, they are particularly vulnerable to sunburn and subsequent skin cancer. The risk can be reduced by keeping your pet out of the sun or by applying sun block to these areas during the summer months, long acting sunscreens for pets or children are ideal as they only need applying once daily.

If you are having a BBQ ensure leftovers are disposed of safely. Make sure that your dogs and cats cannot get to the rubbish bin. You may love a corn on the cob or a chicken skewer but you may not like the veterinary bill of removing one from your dog, or a chicken bone from your cat. Dogs will even chew on the skewers if given half the chance. **Make sure they cannot get to anything they should not have.**

There are a lot of wasps and bees flying around during summer. Some dogs and cats love nothing more than to chase them, but they will sting them like they do us. Try and stop your pet from doing this because a sting in the mouth could cause swelling and breathing difficulties.

If you are going to the beach and taking your dog beware of Jellyfish. Like insect bites jellyfish stings can cause swelling in the mouth and around the eyes. Keep your dog on a lead if there are jellyfish around.

Don't forget about the pets that live outside, ensure that they have plenty of shaded area to get out of the sun. Flies are a huge problem for rabbits in the summer months. Flies are very attracted to rabbits if they have soiled bottoms. The flies lay their eggs which rapidly hatch into flesh eating maggots. It is important to check the bottom of your rabbit daily. If you have an older rabbit or one prone to a dirty bottom using products such as Rearguard® can help minimise the risk of flystrike.

Hot Dogs.

Studies show that leaving a car window open for a dog in a car will make no difference to the temperature inside the car. Temperatures rise quickly in a matter of minutes on a hot day and leaving your dog in the car could result in the death of your dog.

Signs of heat stroke: **Heavy panting, Rapid Pulse, Lethargy, Vomiting, Profuse Salivation, Red Gums & Tongue, Lack of coordination, Diarrhoea**

If you do have to take your dog out with you make sure you take plenty of water for them, and if out in the car make sure you stop regularly.

Leave dogs at home where they are safe.

Grass Seeds.

During spring and summer we usually see an increase in grass seed related problems. Despite the small size of a grass seed they can cause severe problems depending on where they lodge.

The common places we find seeds are stuck between the toes and feet, down the ear canals, in their eyes and up the nose!

Common signs of grass seed problems include;

- Constant shaking of the head
- Holding their head to one side
- Keeping their eyes closed and the eyes weeping
- Lumps or bumps between toes or on skin
- Licking/chewing at their paws/legs
- Constant sneezing
- Pus filled holes in the skin



Grass seeds have a very sharp point and a long tail. When they come into contact with animals they often will prick the skin. As a result of this a small swelling may occur. If the seed is not removed quickly it may start to burrow in. In some cases, they have been known to travel many inches and reach the animals internal organs causing many problems.

Treatment can be tricky at time with the animal often requiring an anaesthetic to explore an abscess and attempt to locate the grass seed by tracking its course under the skin. Each case is individual depending on where the grass seed is lodged and how deep it has burrowed.

The best way to protect your pet against grass seed problems is to be extra vigilant during the months when they pose the greatest risk. Avoiding the long grass when out on walks can help & clipping the hair from between their toes. When you are home from your walk check your pet all over ensuring to check between toes, under the feet and in the ears, anywhere a grass seed might get trapped.

If you are concerned, then please contact the surgery for more advice.

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