



Media Release

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Sunny Spring Days Make Cars Too Hot for Dogs

A little bit of sunshine with spring-like temperatures outside may seem like perfect weather for you, but it can be deadly for your dog. DoveLewis has seen several dogs in the past few days who have died from heatstroke. Temperatures inside a car can quickly rise to dangerous levels on sunny days, even when it's relatively cool outside and you leave the windows cracked or open. Here are a few tips to make sure your pets are safe on hot spring days and this summer.

- **Never leave your pet in the car** It may seem like a car trip will cool off your pet, but it will probably do more harm than good. The sun can raise the temperature in the car to 120 degrees Fahrenheit within minutes.
- **Pets, like humans, need extra water** Whether you're indoors or out, both you and your pet need access to lots of fresh water during the summer, so check water bowls several times a day to be sure it's full. If you go outside, be sure to bring plenty of water for both of you.
- **Keep a close eye on them** If they're extra thirsty, pets are bound to drink something they shouldn't drink. Puddles of what looks like water may be on the ground, but they may include antifreeze or other dangerous chemicals. Did you know that antifreeze has a sweet taste that animals like? But watch out. It can be toxic.
- **Pets need sunscreen** Your pet can get sunburned, just like you! Especially if he or she has light colored hair. Animal sunburns can cause some of the same problems as with people: pain, peeling, and skin cancer. Keep your pet out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. When you do go outside, rub a bit of *pet safe* sunblock on unprotected areas like the tips of the ears, the skin around the lips, and the tip of the nose. *Some sunblock can be dangerous to your pets.* A rule of thumb: If it's safe for babies, it's safe for your pets.
- **Watch the exercise** Don't overdo it in the heat. Keep walks to a gentle pace. If your pet is panting a lot or seems exhausted, it's time to stop. Warm weather exercise followed by a trip home in a hot car may have deadly repercussions.
- **Inside is better than Outside** Even if they're in the shade, animals can get sick quickly on hot days. Keep them inside as much as possible. If you have to leave them outside, check on them regularly.
- **Watch for Heatstroke** It can be fatal. If you suspect your pet has heatstroke, call a veterinarian immediately. In the meantime, lower the animal's body temperature by applying towels soaked in cool water to the hairless areas of the body. Often the pet will respond after only a few minutes of cooling, only to falter again with his temperature soaring back up or falling to well below what is normal. With this in mind, remember that it is imperative to get the animal to a veterinarian *immediately*.
- **Signs of Heatstroke** Panting, Staring, Anxious expression, Refusal to obey commands, Warm, dry skin, High fever, Rapid heartbeat, Vomiting, Collapse.

DoveLewis is Portland's 24-Hour Emergency and ICU Animal Hospital, offering advanced veterinary care in a state-of-the-art facility in Northwest Portland and in Southeast Portland's Plaza 205. DoveLewis also shares several 100% donor-funded programs with the community including one of America's largest volunteer-based animal blood banks, an award-winning animal assisted therapy program, a nationally recognized pet loss support program offering five free group therapy sessions each month, 24-hour stabilizing care for lost, stray and wild animals and financial assistance for low income families and owners of abused pets.