



A Veterinarian's Top Tips for a Safe, Fun Summer

by Dr. Whitney Miller, DVM, MBA, DACVPM, Chief Veterinarian at Petco (NAPS)—Longer, warmer days often mean pets and pet parents are spending more time together outside. Whether you're hosting a pool party, traveling or exploring the great outdoors together this summer, there are a few important things to keep in mind to ensure your pet is happy and healthy all season long:

Keep up with routine care and protect against pests: No matter their age, pets should see their veterinarian for routine wellness exams for preventative care, early detection and intervention. More time outside means a higher chance of bug bites and exposure to tick-borne illnesses. Maintaining a consistent flea-and-tick prevention routine is essential all year long but particularly during warmer months. Your veterinarian can help you choose the best preventative medications, shampoos and tools for your pet. For diseases such as heartworm, a single bite from an infected mosquito can transmit the disease to your pet. To help identify, treat and prevent heartworm in pets, from June 2 through 29 Petco is offering a free* heartworm test with the purchase of select flea, tick and heartworm protection prescription medication at Vetco Vaccination Clinics and Vetco Total Care hospitals nationwide.

Be aware of surroundings: Warmer weather also means animals such as snakes are more active. Consult your veterinarian to determine if your pet should receive the rattlesnake vaccine. Particularly in high-risk areas, keep dogs on a non-retractable leash so they remain close by and stay aware of your surroundings. Positive reinforcement-based training can help teach your pet to be alert and stay by your side. In the event of a bite or other emergency, be sure to know where the closest emergency veterinary hospital is located and how to get there as fast as possible. Treatment plans vary based on the severity and location of the snake bite, so call ahead to ensure the hospital has the availability and proper tools to care for your pet.

Beat the heat: It's always important to look out for and prevent overheating and dehydration in pets, especially during the summer. Keep pets protected from the sun with a hat or tent and ensure they always have access to fresh, clean water. When out on walks, remember that hot asphalt can burn your pet's paws—if it's too hot to hold your hand on the ground for seven seconds, it's too hot for your pet. On hot days, I recommend changing your route to include cooler surfaces such as dirt or grass or invest in a pair of booties for extra protection. To prevent your pets



It's important to take steps to ensure your pet stays cool, happy and healthy all summer long.

from getting a sunburn, avoid excessive sun exposure and apply a pet-safe sunscreen to their ears, nose and anywhere else they have bare skin or thin fur. In addition, pets with thick coats should have a regular grooming schedule to remove excess fur. Petco offers grooming add-ons to a full-service bath or groom including the summer grooming package now through July 6, featuring a tropical-scented spritz, shampoo, seasonal bandana and more.

Include pets in summer fun: For many, a summer pool party or barbecue is not complete without furry friends. Supplies such as a pet pool, cooling vest, splash pad, ice tray, slushy treats and cooling toys help keep pets cool all summer long. For pets that enjoy splashing around, suit up in a stylish swimsuit or flotation vest. Always supervise pets around the pool, especially if they cannot swim or are older and tire easily.

Travel safely: Pet parents planning to bring their pets along on travel and adventures should make sure they have everything they need for the journey. An airline-approved carrier or seat belt extender will keep your pets safe and secure, while a travel bowl and calming chews and toys will help make sure they are happy and comfortable while in transit. Petco's fashion and lifestyle brand, Reddy, brings a new "On-the-Go" collection with a trendy lilac crossbody bag, complete with a waste bag dispenser and carabiner that can be easily attached to a matching lead, collar and treat bag.

Plan for the unthinkable: One in three pets becomes lost at some point in their lifetime.** Pet parents should keep pet ID tags and microchips up to date and register their pets on Petco Love Lost, a free national lost-and-found database that uses patented image-recognition technology to help reunite lost pets with their families.

For more information on summer tips, products, services and savings, visit a Petco pet care center, petco.com or the Petco app.

*Purchase of a 12-month supply of select flea, tick and heartworm combo Rx product and an appointment are required to receive free heartworm test. Valid on purchases of: Simparica Trio or Heartgard Plus and NexGard (these two products must be bought together).

**According Petco Love: Lost Pet Community Survey 2021.