



## How to Keep Your Pet Cool in the Heat: Treats, Play, and Safety Tips for Summer

As the temperatures rise, it's important to help your pet stay safe, comfortable, and cool. Dogs and cats are more sensitive to heat than we are, and they can't regulate their body temperature as effectively. Whether you're enjoying time in the backyard or relaxing indoors, here are simple ways to beat the heat, plus some fun frozen treat ideas and signs of heat stress every pet owner should know!

### Cool Treats for Hot Days

Frozen snacks are a great way to keep your pet refreshed while also providing a little enrichment. Here are a few easy, pet-safe ideas you can make at home:

- **Peanut Butter & Banana Bites:** Blend ripe bananas with xylitol-free peanut butter, spoon into ice cube trays, and freeze.
- **Broth cubes:** Freeze low-sodium chicken or beef broth into small portions for a savory cooling treat.
- **Fruity snacks:** Offer frozen blueberries or seedless watermelon chunks (in moderation).
- **Stuffed Kongs:** Fill with wet food or plain yogurt and freeze for a long-lasting treat.

Always double-check ingredients before making frozen treats. Avoid anything with xylitol, artificial sweeteners, onions, garlic, or grapes.

## Safe Outdoor Play

Exercise is still important in the summer, but it's essential to adjust your routine when the weather is warm. Here are a few ways to keep outdoor time fun and safe:

- **Play in the morning or evening** when the heat is less intense.
- **Stick to shady areas**, or set up a sprinkler, hose mist, or kiddie pool for splash time.
- **Test the pavement** before walking; if it's too hot for your hand, it's too hot for their paws.
- **Keep sessions short and** always offer fresh water and time to rest.
- **Opt for indoor games** when the temperatures are extreme: tug-of-war, food puzzles, or scent games are great ways to burn energy inside.

## Signs of Heat Stress

Even with precautions, it's important to know what heat stress looks like in pets so you can act quickly if needed. Watch for:

- Heavy or excessive panting
- Drooling or bright red gums/tongue
- Lethargy, vomiting, or disorientation
- Rapid heart rate or collapse
- **Cats:** open-mouth breathing

If you suspect your pet is overheating:

- Move them to a cool, shaded, or air-conditioned area.
- Offer small amounts of cool (not cold) water.
- Gently wet their paws, belly, or ears with cool water.
- Call us right away. Heatstroke can escalate quickly and is life-threatening if untreated.

## Keep It Cool and Safe

Summer fun is better when it's safe. With a few simple changes, you can help your pet enjoy the season without risk. From frozen snacks to shaded play and a watchful eye for overheating, your pet will thank you for keeping their well-being top of mind.

Have questions about your pet's heat tolerance or summer safety? We're here to help.

Reach out to schedule a wellness check or speak with our team today!