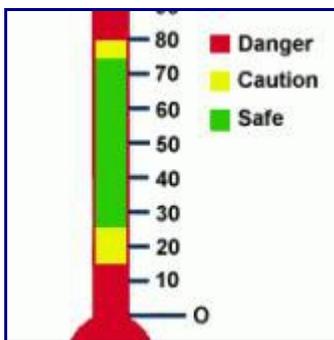




Pugs and Overheating

By Eva Hart



Hot weather and pugs don't go together well. Pug owners must be especially concerned about their pugs' safety and health during the summer months, and plan their outside play and long walks accordingly.

Hot weather is tough on brachycephalic (short-nosed) breeds like pugs. Because of their short noses and smaller air passages, pugs can't adequately cool air or release heat when they are in hot temperatures. Take extra caution with your pug whenever she is in an environment with temperatures exceeding 75 degrees.

Pugs aren't intended to be outdoor dogs. You must monitor their time outdoors and try not to let them out in the hot sun for more than 10-15 minutes. Pugs are notorious for lying on the patio, looking as if they're enjoying the sun. Don't be fooled by this! They don't know any better, so it's up to you to bring them in the cooler house.

Heat stroke (hyperthermia)

If your pug is exposed to hot temperatures and you suspect heat stroke, act immediately. Heat stroke in a pug is an **EMERGENCY** since it can be fatal in as little as ten minutes. Here are signs of heat stroke a pug owner must be aware of:

- Frantic, rapid panting
- Bright red tongue and red or pale gums
- Thick or sticky saliva
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Shock

If any of these occur, move your pug to a cooler area immediately and call your vet.

Your vet may instruct you to soak the pug's entire body with cool water (make sure the water isn't very cold because it can cause your pug shock) and try to find a fan for direct air flow. You will also need to rehydrate your dog and then take him to the vet for further care if the symptoms persist or his temperature is too high.

How high is too high for a pug's temperature? To check, use a rectal thermometer. A pug's normal body temperature is between 101°F and 102°F. If his temperature is above 103°F, then he may be in danger.

Make it a rule: No pugs inside parked cars

This may seem obvious but do not leave your pug unattended in a car. EVER. It may not seem that hot in there to you but cars heat up very quickly and cause serious damage and even death for your pug.

Even on what seems to be a cool 72° day, the inside of a car will quickly rise to 140° or more.

Cracking the window makes almost no difference.

Fourteen states have laws protecting animals left in parked vehicles. Idaho is not one of them. There are not even local ordinances in Idaho that protect animals in parked cars. The Idaho Department of Motor Vehicles does however, provide a website with an article that addresses how fast internal car temperatures rise on a warm day.

What's a pug owner to do to keep a pug healthy in the summer?

You may be thinking, "How does my pug get any exercise in the summer?" It's still OK to take your pug for a walk but make sure you do so early in the morning or later in the evening when the temperature has gone down. Put a cool collar (pugsicle) on your pug BEFORE you take him for a car ride or walk. It is easier to prevent hyperventilating than to stop it. There are also cooling vests on the market if you absolutely must have your pug in the heat.

Another way to get pugs the exercise they need is bringing them for a walk in a pet friendly mall or store that has air conditioning. Or, get them a swimming pool and safety vest. Pugs will enjoy a daily swim if they have the opportunity.

If you do take your pug swimming, remember that pugs can sunburn. Add sunscreen if you are headed outdoors for any length of time. Research the best type of sunscreen for your pug since all sunscreen lotions aren't equal. Hot sand can be as miserable as hot asphalt for pugs' paws, so pay attention to the temperature of your pug's walking surface.

Remember to always keep cool water with you whenever you go on outings, and make sure when you are home that your pug's water dish is always full.

Our pugs rely on us to keep them safe and cool during the sweltering summer months. Please take care this summer, and stay cool!