

## Keeping Kitty Cool During Summer Heat

**CatChannel expert Jeanne Adlon, professional cat sitter, discusses ways to keep cats comfortable in hot months.**

*By Jeanne Adlon*

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**Q:** How can I keep my cat cool during the summer months?

**A:** I remember coming home one brutal summer day, which was made much worse by a power outage, to find my senior cat Raisin panting. I immediately called the vet and she instructed me to rub him with ice cubes and wrap him in a damp towel (she did not want me to immerse him directly in cold water). His panting gradually stopped and his temperature slowly reached normal. Fortunately the power came back on and, with it, the air conditioner. Raisin was fine but it gave me quite a scare.

Cats can be susceptible to heat exhaustion and dehydration during the “dog days” of summer. I believe overweight and senior kitties are at an even higher risk, especially if they are let outside. Try to leave your cat indoors during these days and make sure she has a cool place to rest in.

As always, if you see any signs of distress with your cat, call the vet. Other symptoms of heat exhaustion besides panting can be vomiting, staggering and tremors. Also, never, ever leave a cat alone in a car on a hot day for even a moment. It can quickly become an oven. When at home, keep the air circulating by a fan or air conditioner. Have plenty of fresh water available. Adding ice cubes will keep the water cool and double as a toy.

If you leave your windows open, please make sure they have screens that are securely attached. I say this all the time but I have seen many households in my years as a cat sitter and I can't tell you how many windows with poorly secured screens I have pointed out to owners. Also, lowering the blinds to about 8 inches above the window sill will keep the room cooler and let your kitty watch the world go by.