

## Keep Cats Safe in Hot Weather

**A veterinarian offers tips to help protect your cat from the heat.**

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Grooming your cat during hot weather is a must. An overgrown coat inhibits air circulation with the skin.

They're often called the dog days of summer — days of hot, humid weather that affect humans and animals alike. But the hot weather of summer can adversely affect cats, too.

Tod Schadler, associate dean of clinical studies at Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine in St. Kitts, West Indies, offers these tips to keep your cat safe during hot summer days. Never leave your pet alone in a parked car. Temperatures inside a parked car can climb quickly, reaching as much as 120 degrees even on mild days.

Provide plenty of fresh drinking water. Even indoor cats need fresh drinking water, made available at all times.

Avoid excessive exercise on hot days. If your cats are accustomed to daily outings, schedule them for cooler times of day, such as early mornings or late evenings.

Keep your pet well-groomed. Overgrown coats prevent good air circulation with your cat's skin, making it more difficult to maintain a comfortable body temperature.

Watch for signs of heatstroke. Warning signs include panting, staring or anxious expressions, warm and dry skin, high body temperature, rapid heartbeat and possibly vomiting. Call your vet immediately if your cat shows any of these signs.