

Cold Weather Tips for Pets

Seven ways to avoid weather-related illness.

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There are a few more weeks of winter left and during these times of extreme weather, pet health experts and organizations advise the public to take some simple measures to protect their pets.

“It’s so important to remember that your pet is susceptible to sickness and disease just as you are during times of extremely cold weather,” said Betsy Saul, co-founder of Petfinder.com, an online, searchable database of animals that need permanent homes.

Cold weather tips offered to keep pets safe include:

After a walk, remove any ice or snow from your cat’s paws and towel him or her off to avoid a chill.

Make sure your pet has plenty of high-quality protein if he or she is outside — staying warm burns more calories.

Always give the hood of your car a sharp knock before starting the engine. Cats and other small animals sometimes climb up under car hoods to get warm. The noise will wake them up and give them time to escape.

Never leave your pet in a car during cold weather. A car is like a refrigerator and might cause hypothermia.

Give your pet has a warm place to sleep. Some helpful hints include placing a pet bed away from drafts; and lining the floor with an old rug, blanket or dry straw.

Never use metal water bowls outside. When it’s cold, a pet’s tongue could stick to the metal. Check water frequently to ensure it has not frozen.

Save that shaved look for warm weather. Cats need their full fur coats when temperatures dip.