

Prevent Heat Stroke Deaths in Dog: A Summer Call to Action for Pet Owners

Recent shocking deaths of two dogs underscore the importance of awareness and preventative measures from the dangers of heat stroke.

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*Stacie Atria, Doctor of
Veterinary Medicine*

temperatures skyrocket, pet owners must take proactive steps to protect their dogs against the dangers of heat stroke. Recent deadly incidents involving two dogs, Sunny and Hagrid, underscore the importance of awareness and preventative measures.

Sunny, a 6-year-old Goldendoodle in Springfield, Texas, had his life cut short due to a heat stroke. Despite immediate efforts to cool him down and rush him to the vet, it was too late.

“Sunny's passing was devastating for our family. It taught us the critical importance of being vigilant about

temperature and understanding the signs of heat stroke,” says former owner Bricks Coggin. Sunny's story serves as a heartbreaking reminder that even short periods of exposure to high temperatures can be fatal for dogs.

Another shocking incident involved Hagrid, a 100-pound German Shepherd in Gainesville, Florida, who had underlying health issues. His Degenerative Myelopathy, a progressive neurological disease affecting his mobility, made him especially sensitive to heat. At the vet clinic, they administered intravenous fluids to prevent dehydration and monitored his vital signs closely. Despite their best efforts, Hagrid's condition worsened, and he eventually fell victim to the complications of heat stroke.

“This case underscores the importance of acting quickly and efficiently when a dog shows signs of heat stroke—particularly in breeds that are vulnerable due to their size and health conditions,” says Stacie Atria, the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine who treated Hagrid. “Regular check-ups and consults on managing heat sensitivity can save lives, especially during hot weather.”

These incidents highlight the urgent need for pet owners to be aware of heat stroke prevention. Dogs are particularly susceptible to overheating as they cannot regulate their body temperature as efficiently as humans.

Here are key steps to ensure your pet's safety during hot weather:

1. **Limit Exercise On Hot Days:** Avoid strenuous activities during peak heat hours. Opt for early morning or late evening walks when temperatures are cooler.
2. **Provide Ample Shade And Water:** Ensure your dog has access to cool, shaded areas and plenty of fresh water at all times when outdoors.
3. **Avoid Leaving Dogs In Cars:** Even with windows cracked, temperatures inside a car can rise rapidly and become life-threatening.
4. **Know The Signs Of Heat Stroke:** Symptoms include excessive panting, drooling, lethargy, vomiting, and collapse. Immediate action is critical—move your dog to a cool area, apply cool (not cold) water to its body, and seek veterinary care immediately.

Veterinarians like Atria stress that certain breeds and dogs with pre-existing health conditions, like Hagrid's Degenerative Myelopathy, are at higher risk. Caution is necessary with all pets, but especially for medically vulnerable pets.

"We urge all pet owners to understand the signs of heat stroke and to take every precaution to prevent it," said Michelle Schenker, Co-Founder of [CanineJournal.com](https://www.caninejournal.com). "Sunny and Hagrid's stories are tragic reminders of how quickly heat can become fatal for dogs. With the right knowledge and care, these incidents are preventable. An active [pet insurance](#) policy can also ensure that if your dog requires treatment, you can act quickly, knowing that many of the costs will be covered in this emergency situation."

For more information on heat stroke prevention in dogs, please visit www.caninejournal.com/heat-stroke-in-dogs.

Sadie Cornelius

Canine Journal

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