

Preventing Spring & Summer Health Problems



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conditioning: begin several weeks in advance and slowly increase your dog's exercise period each day so that he can increase muscle strength and acclimate to the increase in temperatures.



If it is humid or hotter than 80 degrees outside, most dogs should not exercise due to the extraordinary stress this can place on the heart. Symptoms of problems can include: fainting, coughing, heavy or excessive panting, disorientation, weakness and collapse. If these signs are noted, then all exercise should be stopped, they should be provided cool water and taken to your nearest veterinary facility. Certain breeds are more susceptible to heat and exercise problems, these include Beagles, Boxers, Collies, Fox Terriers, Miniature and Toy Poodles,

Shetland Sheepdogs and Dobermans, but these problems can occur in any breed.

The return to exercise in the spring can often worsen orthopedic or muscle/nerve related conditions that go unnoticed during the winter months. Arthritis is a common condition that affects many dogs as they age. This painful condition can be worsened by activity. Loss of muscle mass, which helps to cushion the joints and decrease pain on activity, often occurs as pets are less active. Consult with your veterinarian regarding options for controlling the pain associated with arthritis in your dog, as well as treatments that can help to slow the progression of this often debilitating condition.

Because dogs rely on panting as their primary means of cooling themselves, increases in activity in the springtime in a dog that can no longer pant effectively can result in life-threatening overheating. A medical condition, called laryngeal paralysis, can develop slowly over the course

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of the winter months, and only cause problems when activity and outdoor temperatures increase in the spring. In the upcoming June issue, I will detail more regarding the signs and symptoms of this condition.

In addition to the above heat related illnesses, dogs can develop sunburn. Thin/white haired dogs and recently shaved dogs are more at risk. Consult your veterinarian regarding the use of sunscreen to help prevent the occurrence of sunburn in your dog.

Another health concern in the summer is the hot pavement. Your pet may need extra protection for their feet. Prolonged running on hot pavement can result in severe burns to the bottom of the pads. In addition, excessive pad wear and even ulceration can occur when a dog runs excessively on hot, paved surfaces.

Our canine companions are so eager to please us that they often don't know when to stop. Please be a good parent and don't allow your dog to exert themselves to the point of injury, exhaustion or illness.

Please join us in the June issue as Dr. Rosenberg continues to explore preventing summertime health problems.

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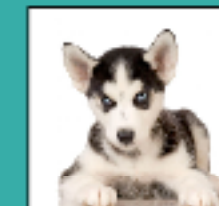
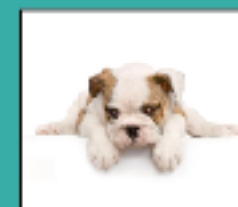
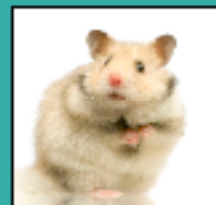
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