

# Can Cats Get Heat Stroke?

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As it gets warmer, don't forget that [cats](#) can suffer just like [dogs](#) from too much heat. We are now entering the summer season and with it will come the hottest days of the year. Each summer, many pets are exposed to extreme heat conditions and a tragic number of them [die a frightful death as they become overheated](#).

### Cats and cars

For dogs, the greatest heat threat is usually being locked in a hot car. Cats may not take as many road trips, but that doesn't mean they don't take any. It is not uncommon for cats to accompany people in the car, particularly when taking a trip to see the [veterinarian](#).

As with dogs, even short periods of being left in the car can result in extreme [heat](#) and heat stroke. It's a life threatening medical condition in which the body's internal organs ([liver](#), [kidneys](#), lungs, [heart](#) and [brain](#)) begin to shut down as a result of elevated body temperature caused by high, external temperatures and humidity.

### How will I know if my cats are hot or comfortable?

As a rule, if people are comfortable with the temperature in the environment, dogs and cats are as well. However, it's always a good idea to watch for signs of heat stroke. Our cats have no real effective means of regulating body temperature. Cats cool their body much like dogs do, through minor perspiration on the foot pads and by panting, which allows them to dissipate heat by evaporation. Neither is a very effective cooling system for extreme heat situations. Remember that even at a reasonable starting temperature, the temperature in a small space can soar without ventilation.

The heating that can occur in a closed car, for example, can be shocking. [Noheatstroke.org](#) reports that On an 80 degree day, when a car is parked in the sun, temperatures can reach 123 degrees in 60 minutes. The website also published data on just how fast the

heat was rising inside of a parked car:

- 10 minutes resulted in an increased interior temperature of ~ 19 degrees F.
- 20 minutes ~ 29 degrees
- 30 minutes ~ 34 degrees
- 60 minutes ~ 43 degrees
- 1 to 2 hours ~ 45-50 degrees

### Signs of heat stroke in cats

Signs of heat stroke in cats are very similar to those seen in dogs, and include:

- [Rapid panting](#)
- Bright red tongue
- Dark red gums
- Very pale gums
- [Salivation \(drooling\)](#)
- [Weakness](#)
- [Anxiety](#)

### Which cats are at the greatest risk of heat stroke?

**Any cat can develop heat stroke, however, some are at greater risk, including:**

- Short faced breeds such as [Persians](#)
- Old cats
- Young cats
- Sick cats
- [Obese](#) cats
- [Cats with heart conditions](#)
- [Cats with breathing problems](#)
- Pregnant and nursing cats

### How can I help my cats avoid heat stroke?

- Consider that if you would not be comfortable or safe in an environment, neither are your cats.
- Never leave your cats (or any animal) [in a parked car](#). While this is especially important in hot weather, it can be just as big a danger in the cooler months.
- Make sure your cats always have access to a shaded area where they can escape from the sun and heat.
- [Keep your cats inside](#) where you can control the heat.
- Do not confine your cats to any room where

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temperatures are especially high, such as a sunroom.

- [Always be sure to provide fresh, cool water.](#)
- If possible, provide your cats with air conditioning on especially hot days.

[Click here for more tips on keeping your cats cool on a hot day.](#)

*If you have any questions or concerns, you should always visit or call your veterinarian -- they are your best resource to ensure the health and well-being of your pets.*