Do not leave your pet alone in your car
Vehicles heat quickly in the sun, and animals left in them can succumb to heat stroke in a very short time. Signs to watch for are: heavy, loud breathing, a staggering gait, and a bright red tongue or gum tissue. If heat stroke is suspected, get the animal to a cool place, put cold compresses on his belly, or wet him down. This is a medical emergency—take him to your veterinarian as quickly as possible.

Limit exercise
To prevent him or her from overheating, don’t let your dog exercise in hot weather. If you want to run with your dog, do it in the cool hours of the early morning or late evening.

Keep cool
Dogs and cats need a cool, shady place to sleep during hot weather, as well as plenty of clean, fresh water, accessible at all times. Feed your dog or cat in the cooler hours of the day. Older animals have a hard time in hot weather, so be extra sensitive to their needs during the hottest hours of the day.

Vaccinate!
Be sure that your pet’s vaccinations are up to date. Parvo virus, an illness that flourishes in hot weather, can be fatal to dogs that have not received their vaccinations. Also, be sure your pet’s rabies vaccinations are current. During the summer months, pets often spend more time outdoors, and the chances of encounters with wildlife (possible rabies carriers) increase.

Beware of heartworms
If your dog hasn’t been tested for heartworm this year, see your veterinarian. Heartworm is transmitted by mosquitoes, but it can be prevented by administering a monthly preventive between early spring and November.

Grooming
Keep your pet well-groomed. Daily brushing or combing lets you check for fleas and ticks. Fleas can cause allergic reactions and “hot spots” in dogs. Hot spots are large, wet lesions that appear suddenly in areas where the dog has scratched. See your veterinarian for flea and tick preventives or if a “hot spot” appears.

Keep ‘em leashed!
Leashes save dogs’ lives! Keep your dog on a leash when you are walking him so he can’t run into traffic or chase cats and squirrels or other wildlife.

Fireworks
Play with your pet to fend off July 4th firework fears. Playing a game with your pet when he shows early signs of anxiety, like pacing or trembling, can distract him from the stressor and, in the long term, teach him to associate that same stressor with positive things such as play and treats.

Keep a lid on the picnic food
Keep dogs away from picnic garbage. Ingesting corn cobs and chicken and other bones can be life-threatening. Also, according to the ASPCA animal poison control center, many fruits - including any peels, seeds, or stems - that can cause gastrointestinal irritation and result in vomiting and diarrhea, when eaten. In severe cases, weakness, difficulty breathing, hyperventilation, shock, and even death can occur.

Keep windows secure
Use a heavy screen on windows or keep them closed if you have cats. During the summer, the number of cats suffering from “high rise” syndrome, or falling from windows, increases dramatically. The most severe injuries occur when cats fall from second or third floor windows.

Guard the pool
If you have a pool, don’t leave your dog unattended in the pool area. Not all dogs can swim and can drown if they fall into the water.