



# Summer time

Summer has arrived, and although it's a great time of the year with all the festivities and holidays, we need to keep in mind the health and wellbeing of all our family members. We have put together our top 10 tips for helping your pet survive the silly season.

## HOT!! HOT!! HOT!!

As the end of year approaches, the temperature rises. It is especially hot in Townsville with our lovely tropical climate. Just as you love to keep cool during these blistering days, so too do our pets. Always ensure your pet has access to clean, fresh water every day and lots of it!

If your pet loves the water, why not include a dipping pool? For smaller pets it might be as simple as putting a large shallow bowl out for them to hop into; and for the larger dogs, a kid's shell pool is great. Make sure it is not too deep though as hot animals trying to beat the heat can drown if they get stuck. If you have a family swimming pool, always make sure the gate is shut so your pet doesn't get tempted to jump in and not be able to get out.

Make sure your pet has plenty of access to shade or even better, allow you furry friend to come inside to share your aircon or fan.

Give your pet an ice block. You can make your own by filling an old, clean ice cream container up with just water, or you can add a beef or chicken stock and freeze overnight. You can even add some treats into the water before freezing to make it more appetizing. Once frozen, pop the ice out of the container and watch your friend go nuts licking and playing with it.

When taking your dog for a walk, do this in the early mornings or late afternoon to avoid the hottest part of the day.

White dogs and cats are more susceptible to skin cancer, so applying a pet zinc cream to their ears and noses is a great idea if they will be exposed to the sun.

## Grooming

Pets should be brushed regularly and this is particularly important in Summer. As Winter was not too long ago, many pets are still losing their undercoats and they need help brushing them out. If the undercoat of a pet has not been removed it can cause the pet to feel hotter. This is due to the cool air being blocked from reaching the skin and the undercoat absorbing the sun's rays, trapping extra heat in. It can also cause matts which pull



when your pet walks. It feels just like getting your hair pulled! Your pet may also benefit from the cooling effects of a coat clip. If you are not confident to tackle this yourself, you can come and see us! We have a professional dog groomer to do it for you.

## Never lock an animal in the car

Not even for 30 seconds. Even on cloudy days or if the car is parked in the shade, the temperature inside the car will increase very quickly - even with the windows down. Pets are at severe risk of heat exhaustion and death in this situation. A dog left in a car can die within as little as 6 minutes as they are not able to sweat to cool themselves, and panting will only cause the temperature in the car to rise even more quickly.

## Watch out for snakes

Unlike a lot of animals, snakes can really thrive when the weather warms up. They become much more active in Summer and we need to be extra careful to safeguard our pets from snake bites.

Dogs and cats love to chase and kill snakes resulting in snake bites, usually to the face and legs. The sort of reaction your pet can have to a snake bite is determined by a number of factors, such as the type of snake, the amount of venom injected and the site of the snake bite. Generally the closer the bite to the heart the quicker the venom spreads to the rest of the body.

Snakes are attracted to the cover of scrub and long grass, so keep your lawn and gardens well-manicured. If you're walking your furry friends through bush land or parks, be careful to stay on the tracks so you can clearly see the ground and any possible snakes that may cross your path.

## Venomous Snakes



If you need any help or advice; go to the **Townsville Snake Catchers** page on Facebook.

Also you can call **North Queensland Wildlife Care** on: **0414 717 374**

## Secure the perimeter

It's a great idea to ensure that your yard/house is safe and secure. Many pets can be spooked by loud noises including thunder storms and fireworks. An escape proof property means there is no chance of your pet becoming lost or running into traffic. All owners should also make sure their pets have identification tags and their council registration tag secured to their collar. It's also a great time to make sure your pet's microchip contact information is up to date just in case they do manage to find an escape route.

Check out the Townsville City Council website for any events happening so you can prepare yourself and your pet. <https://whatson.townsville.qld.gov.au/>

## Keep decorations out of harm's way

Christmas decorations such as tinsel, baubles and Christmas lights are very fun to play with but they do pose a choking and electrocution hazard to your pets. Making sure all decorations are strung high enough off the ground will help to keep your curious friend from being tempted to play. Gift wrapping ribbon is another

item you should keep well away from your pet. So make sure once the presents have been unwrapped, the entire gift wrapping paper should be picked up and put in a secure bin.



## Provide a safe haven

When the house becomes crowded with friends and family celebrating the silly season, shy animals can become nervous and seek solitude. Make sure your friend has a safe, quiet place away from people where they can retreat to if they become too overwhelmed. Also, remind visiting small children that not all pets like to be touched and chased, and that they should always ask the owner of the animal if they are able to pat their pet.

## Don't share your Christmas lunch

We've all seen the longing eyes of our beloved pets hoping and praying for a small morsel of tasty human food to drop from the table, especially at holiday time. Although it's nice to give your pet treats, human food is not the answer. Many human foods can be dangerous, if not fatal to pets. If you want to give them a special treat, make it something that is designed for your pet. They will love it just the same and you won't have any emergency dashes to the vet.

## Tick, flea and flu season

Fleas and ticks love our humid climate and they can become especially bad during the Summer time. Ensuring your pet's flea and tick prevention is up to date will help keep these nasty biters at bay.

Summer time also brings about canine flu season. Canine cough can strike at any time, but Christmas holidays are usually when it's at its worst. Although the disease is often spread when dogs are in boarding kennels, it can also be contracted through shared water bowls, socialising at dog parks or even when dogs greet each other while out walking. Canine cough is primarily caused by a combined bacterial and viral infection with a hacking cough as the classic symptom. Your dog can also suffer from fever, lethargy and a reduced appetite.

Fortunately, it's easy to protect your dog against canine cough with an annual vaccination that protects against the

most common causative organisms. So make sure your dog's vaccinations are up to date before the flu season hits.

## Parvovirus

Canine parvovirus is a highly infectious virus that attacks the gastrointestinal tract and cardiovascular system of dogs. Susceptible dogs become infected by ingesting the virus. The virus is resistant to the effects of heat, detergents and alcohol and can remain in the environment for several years after an infected dog has been there. The symptoms of parvovirus are; lethargy, unwillingness to eat, vomiting and bloody diarrhoea. The treatment for it is aggressive and can be required for several days and even weeks making it quite expensive to treat. Fortunately, by vaccinating your pet you are preventing them becoming infected with this disease. Puppies require three boosters (6-9weeks, 12weeks, and 14-16wks) and adult dogs require a yearly booster. All Townsville suburbs are at risk for this virus being present, so NEVER take your puppy outside of its home environment until ALL puppy vaccinations have been completed.

## Take them with you

Heading out of town on a holiday?? Why not take your pet with you?? Pet friendly accommodation is an ever increasing industry, with a lot of favorite holiday spots boasting accommodation to suit your entire family. <http://www.wotif.com/hotels/australia-pet-friendly-hotels.html>

If you are taking them with you, remember to pack a bag for them too. It's important to remember their leads, water and food containers, food, bedding and toys so that your friend enjoys the holiday just as much as you. When

traveling in the car, make sure your animal is always securely harnessed to a secure anchor point in your vehicle. In case you have an accident, this will ensure your pet doesn't become a free flying missile in your car. As you would buckle up yourselves and the kids, make sure your pet is buckled up too. Also keep in mind that you may need to stop more regularly along the way to let your pet stretch their legs and have a toilet and drink stop.



If taking them with you is out of the question, make sure you go and visit the many animal boarding facilities located in and around our great city. Make sure you pick one that would suit you and your animals needs and it is somewhere where you will feel comfortable leaving your beloved friend.

Remember, the end of year is a busy time for everyone, so book well in advance to make sure you secure a holiday house for your animal. Also note that any good quality boarding facilities or pet friendly accommodation will need to site your animal's vaccination certificate. Making sure you have a current copy of your pet's vaccination history and that they are up to date with all of their immunisations is essential when planning the holiday.

## Hammett Street Vets trading times over the Christmas and New Year period

Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> December	8.00 to 5.30
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> December	8.00 to 5.30
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> December	8.00 to 5.30
Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December	8.00 to 5.30
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> December	8.00 to 5.30
Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>CLOSED</b>
Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>CLOSED</b>
Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>CLOSED</b>
Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>CLOSED</b>
Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> December	8.00 to 5.30
Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> December	8.00 to 5.30
Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> December	8.00 to 5.30
Saturday 31 <sup>st</sup> December	<b>CLOSED</b>
Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> January	<b>CLOSED</b>
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> January	<b>CLOSED</b>
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> January	Back to normal trading hours

If you have an emergency over the Christmas period please call:  
**JCU Emergency hospital on: 4781 3600**

### Other information

Email address: [admin@hammettstreetvets.com.au](mailto:admin@hammettstreetvets.com.au)

Website: <http://www.hammettstreetvets.com.au/>

Or you can find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HammettStVeterinaryClinic>



*From All the Management and staff at*

*Hammett Street Vets*

*We wish you a*

*Happy and Safe Christmas*

*and a Happy New Year!*