

KEEPING PETS SAFE IN FREEZING WEATHER

Dogs and cats are vulnerable to hypothermia (low body temperature) and frostbite (frozen body parts) when exposed to cold temperatures for too long. If you notice your pet is shivering, that is a clear sign that he is cold.

PREVENTION IS KEY

Keep Pets Inside and Limit Time Outdoors

Pet coats and sweaters are more than fashionable - they also keep your pet warm in cold temperatures.

Never Leave Pets Alone in a Car

Once a car's ignition has been turned off, cold temperatures can quickly infiltrate the vehicle, creating a freezer-like environment. Limit travel with your pet to only that which is necessary and bring pets along when you leave the vehicle - even for quick stops.



WHAT TO WATCH FOR

Signs of Hypothermia in Pets

- Violent shivering, followed by listlessness
- Problems breathing
- Weak pulse
- Lethargy
- Muscle stiffness
- Lack of appetite

What to do if You Suspect Hypothermia

Triage your pet by:

- Wrapping him in a warm blanket or coat. (Fabrics can be warmed in the dryer for a few minutes.)
- Bringing him into a warm room.
- Placing warm, towel-wrapped water bottles against your pet's abdomen or at her armpits and chest, then wrap her in a blanket.
- Do not use hair dryers, heating pads, or electric blankets to warm up a hypothermic pet as this may result in burns or compromised circulation to vital organs.
- Call your veterinarian immediately!

Signs of Frostbite in Pets

- Tips of ears and tail have red- or gray-tinged skin
- Skin often appears pale, gray, or blue at first and red/puffy later
- Pain in ears, tail, or paws when touched
- Skin that stays cold
- Shriveled skin
- For cats: paws, tail, and ears are most vulnerable
- For dogs: tail, ears, foot pads, and scrotum are most vulnerable

What to do if You Suspect Frostbite

Triage your pet by:

- Gently warming the afflicted areas by immersing them in warm (not hot) water or gently covering them with warm, moist towels for at least 20 minutes
- Handle affected areas gently
- Never rub or massage affected areas as this will worsen the damage
- Do not use hair dryers, heating pads, or electric blankets to warm up a hypothermic pet as this may result in burns
- Call your veterinarian immediately!