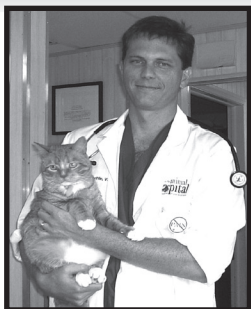


VETERINARY

Q ● I am a new dog owner and I am so
● looking forward to the spring and summer with my dog. I like to go jogging and can't wait to bring him along. Any special advice?

A ● Yes! I am so glad you asked. The warm weather is a great opportunity for you and your dog to get fresh air and exercise together, but careful. Just as your exercise regime should be tailored for you, so must it be for your dog. Moderate exercise on a cool day at a comfortable pace for your dog is a great thing. Unfortunately, I have seen many dogs over-exerted in an effort to keep up with their owners. Your dog may not slow down or stop when tired or pushed too far. Even what you consider to be a slow run can be a huge effort for an older or typically sedentary dog. So, it is up to you to control your dog's exertion level.



William Griffin, VMD

If you are planning to start your dog on an exercise program, please discuss it first with your veterinarian. After a thorough physical, your veterinarian will be able to provide you with advice as to any limitations or precautions you should take based on your pet's health and breed.

Some common sense advice:

Jog at a leisurely pace early in the morning or evening when it is coolest and humidity is low.

Bring ample water for your dog.

Allow your dog to control the pace.

Take breaks and observe your pet for evidence of exertion and stress.

If you do see signs that your dog may have become over-exerted (excessive panting, weakness and fatigue, stumbling, a reluctance to get up and walk), then attempt to cool your dog as quickly as possible. Wet your pet down with cool running water, place him or her in a cool air conditioned car or under a fan and get him or her to your veterinarian as soon as possible. Hyperthermia or heat stroke is a serious medical condition and needs to be treated immediately. By the way, dogs are extremely susceptible to heat stroke when left in a car. You should never leave your dog in a car unattended if the temperature outside is over 65 degrees, even just for a few minutes.

Proper exercise is healthy for you and your pet and it is a great way to strengthen the bond between you and your best friend. Enjoy the good weather!

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