

Summer's here, school's out and that means more traveling and adventures with your Airedale. Here are a few reminders about caring for your Airedale in the summer heat.

Travel:

When traveling in the car with your Airedale, it's safest to keep him restrained in a crate or with a dog seat belt harness (www.carealotpets.com; www.ohmydogsupplies.com). Do not let him stick his head out the window as eye or nose damage can occur. Stop frequently for water and potty breaks. Remember that the temperature inside a parked car even in the shade with the windows partly rolled down can reach temperatures of 120-150 F quickly.

If flying with your Airedale, book direct and overnight flights to minimize your dog's exposure to high temperatures. Make sure your dog is removed from the plane as soon as possible. Dogs held in baggage compartments on hot runways can sicken when the ventilation is turned off on arrival.

Shelter and Water:

Always provide cool shelter and protection from the sun for your Airedale in hot weather and plenty of fresh, cool water. Do not give ice water as it may shock a dog's system and cause intestinal upset.

The use of cool mats is a good idea, and a cool mat may be used in his crate when traveling. Cool Mats and Cool Coats are available through most pet supply companies and Amazon.com. The SherBert company (www.sherbertstuff.com) supplies cool mats and coats for dogs on duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. Also, battery-operated Clip Fans can be used to cool dogs in crates.

Some dog owners use K9 sunglasses and ILS Doggles to protect their dog's eyes from UV radiation in the sun (www.carealotpets.com).

Exercise:

Limit your dog's exercise and walks to early morning or late evenings. Limit running and jogging as the body temperature rises faster than excess heat can be dissipated through panting. Don't walk your dog on hot surfaces such as asphalt, sidewalks or sand. Their tender pad skin can blister and burn easily.

Heat Stroke:

Heat exhaustion and heat stroke can occur quickly in hot weather and can lead to death. The warning signs of heat stroke are rapid panting, twitching muscles, hot skin and a dazed look. Take immediate action by cooling your dog with cool towels, cold water from a hose or immersion in a cold bath. **Seek immediate veterinary attention.**

Lakes and Ocean:

Always supervise your Airedale if you take him with you into the lake or the ocean. Pool swimming is not a good idea as chlorinated pool water will irritate your Airedale's eyes. Always rinse or bath your Airedale thoroughly after time in the lake or ocean. It's a good idea to use a sunscreen on your Airedale's nose and ears if he will spend time in the sun. Consult with your vet or use a quality hypoallergenic product.

Discourage your dog from drinking lake water as it may contain parasites and other contaminants. Drinking sea (salt) water can be deadly in quantities.

Ticks and Fleas:

Check your Airedale regularly for ticks and fleas, and consult with your vet about the appropriate tick/flea control for your area. Summer is high season for fleas and ticks. Tick-borne diseases in dogs and humans are on the rise. Tick bites have been implicated as the cause of some autoimmune diseases. If heartworm disease is a concern in your area, have your Airedale tested for the disease before you apply preventive.