

Dog's Ear Problem and Heatstroke

When it's hot outside, use a few precautions to keep your dog from overheating.

By Jon Geller, DVM

Q. We have a 3-year-old female German Shepherd Dog. She has a kind of heat boil inside her ear that looks like a pimple.

The average temperature here in India is 31 to 34 degrees Celsius (88 to 93 degrees Fahrenheit). I'm wondering it could be because her body is overheating. Can you tell me what it could be and if any treatment is needed.

A. It must be challenging to keep your German Shepherd Dog comfortable in the heat. The problem in her ear is most likely not related to the temperature, but sounds more like a skin infection. A course of antibiotics would be a reasonable approach.

In warm weather, take precautions so your dog doesn't get heatstroke, a potentially fatal problem. This occurs when a dog becomes so overheated that he cannot pant fast enough to dissipate the heat. (Dogs can't sweat like humans.)

As a dog's body temperature rises, permanent damage can be done to his brain, intestines and kidneys. Only exercise your dog at night when it's cooler, and provide cool, fresh water at all times.

if your dog ever becomes overheated, cool him off gradually--sudden cooling can cause shock. A fan, a light spray of cold water, and wet towels are all strategies to help him cool off, if needed.