



HEAT RELATED ILLNESS IN PETS

Latest research using SAVSNET data

Heat related illness (HRI) is a potentially fatal disorder that can affect mammals and is predicted to become more common as global temperatures rise.

Paper published in the Open Veterinary Journal [available here](#)



DATA FROM VETERINARY PRACTICES

Data were collected from veterinary practices participating in SAVSNET.

174 pets were presented for veterinary treatment between 2013 and 2018, including dogs, cats, guinea pigs, rabbits and one ferret.



DOGS

83.9% of cases were dogs.

These dogs presented to vets with HRI between April and October, and July is the month when most were affected.

Most dogs develop HRI after exercise (73.5%).

Brachycephalic dogs were over represented, so owners should be particularly cautious in hot weather.



CATS

9.2% of cases were cats.

June and July were the months when most cats were affected.

Older cats (15 years or older) appear to be more susceptible.

Hot weather was the reported trigger for feline patients (environmental HRI).



SMALL PETS

4.6% of cases were guinea pigs and 1.7% were rabbits.

Guinea pigs, rabbits and ferrets were affected from June to August. Hot weather leading to hot hutches/cages was the cause reported for these species.

Owners should check pets more frequently in hot weather, and take steps to keep pets cool such as reviewing the location and type of housing used.

“There is a misconception that heat related illness in pets only relates to dogs in hot cars and we need to do more to raise awareness of the risk factors and causes, not only for dogs but in the wider pet population.

Thank you to all the veterinary practices that contribute data to SAVSNET and made this research possible.



Emily Hall



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