

# ASK OUR VETERINARIANS



## Protect Your Pet from Winter Hazards

### Part 1

If you are too cold to be outside without a coat, your dog probably is too. If your cat eats just one of your acetaminophen cold and flu tablets, it could be fatal . . .

Those are just two of the many risks that threaten your pet's safety in the winter. Here are some other basic cold weather precautions that experts offer to keep pets safe during the winter months.

- Keep your dog's coat longer for warmth. If you have a shorthaired pet, provide them with a coat or sweater that covers him or her from neck to base of tail.
- Keep your dog leashed in the snow and make sure it has an ID tag. Dogs can lose scents in the snow and become lost.
- Never leave a pet unattended in a car. The vehicle will act like a refrigerator, holding in the cold and potentially freezing you pet.
- Make sure your pet has a warm place to sleep, away from drafts and if possible off the floor.
- Outdoor cats and wildlife will often sleep under hoods of cars. Bang on the hood before starting the engine to give the animal a chance to escape.
- Pets, like people, are vulnerable to hypothermia and frostbite. Take your pet to a veterinarian if it is shivering, disoriented and lethargic or if its hair is puffed out and standing on end. Frostbite can turn skin bright red, pale or black. Skin at the tips of ears and on extremities, including reproductive organs, are particularly at risk.
- Keep pets away from medication commonly used during cold and flu season. Many human medications can have a severe health risk if ingested by pets.

We all want our pets to enjoy the winter with us. By taking a few precautions and preventative measures against winter hazards, we can all have a happy, healthy winter together. Look for more winter tips soon!



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