



VETERINARY IRELAND PRESS RELEASES

(7 August 2003)

Vets Issue Warning to All Pet Owners on the Dangers of Heatstroke

Veterinary Ireland's Companion Animal Society (VICAS) has today issued a warning to all pet owners, alerting them to the dangers of heatstroke in pets during the current period of strong sun and high temperatures.

Speaking in Dublin today, Syd Nagle, Chairperson of VICAS, highlighted those pets most at risk. "Black coated animals, energetic animals that exercise a lot and animals that sunbathe are the most prone to heatstroke", he said. "Dogs with fore shortened faces such as Pugs, Pekinese, Boxers and Cavaliers are also high risk".

Symptoms of heatstroke include heavy breathing, blueness of tongue and lips, gasping for air and collapse.

"If you find your pet in this condition" advised Syd Nagle, "contact your local veterinary surgeon for advice **immediately**. If a veterinary surgeon is not currently available, pet owners should soak towels or blankets in cold water and drape these over the pet until veterinary assistance can be obtained."

As prevention is better than cure, one piece of advice from VICAS is that those animals prone to heatstroke should be sprayed with water 2-3 times a day during hot periods and should have access to fresh, clean water as and when they require it.

Over the past two days in Dublin alone veterinary surgeons have reported several cases of heatstroke in pets, including at least one fatality. In concluding, Syd Nagle stated that "VICAS cannot stress enough that heatstroke is a fatal condition if it is not treated immediately. Pet owners should attempt to minimise the risks and act without delay should they feel that their pet is suffering from this condition".

For further information please contact:

Syd Nagle,
Chairperson,
VICAS

Peter Bishton,
Operations Executive,
Veterinary Ireland

01-838-3003

01-457-7976