

Summer 2024



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Our featured pets



Meet Kiara!

Meet Kiara— a young shepherd mix who has been patiently waiting for her forever home! She is doing great in her foster home and is now crate and potty trained! She sleeps contently in her crate all night and gives her foster mom space while she works throughout the day.

Kiara loves her foster fur brother as well as all other dogs. She is so playful and dog friends truly bring out the best in her so another pup in the home to help build her confidence is ideal. Another thing she absolutely love is car-rides. Her foster mom says Kiara is not only a big goofball but also a sweet girl who loves to play and go on walks. She will sit directly on your lap for pets and give you lots of kisses.

Kiara can be skittish, and is getting used to normal noises and movements. It is very clear she was never in a home who loved her like she deserves. Kiara is a big fan of kids, but takes a lot of time to be comfortable with men. Slow intros are a must to build her trust. Kiara deserves a home and family that will put the time in to love and support her to become the best pup she can be! For more information about Kiara, please email: dogs@almosthomefoundation.org



Meet Pixie!

Pixie is just over six years old. She is a somewhat new, rare, domestic breed called a Nebelung. This breed resembles the Russian Blue and Maine Coon.

Pixie has medium to long blue/grey fur, a long tail, and striking green eyes. She is very beautiful and because of her large breed currently weighs 17 pounds. Since she has long hair, she should be brushed often so her fur stays soft and shiny.

She does not like other cats or dogs so must be an only pet. Pixie would be best suited in a quieter home with older children who know how to treat her gently. She loves people, is very friendly, likes lots of attention and plays with her toys. She likes to be brushed and petted, and also sit on your lap and sleep with you. She would be a great companion for seniors or someone who has recently lost a pet and is trying to fill the void in their life.

Pixie knows there is someone out there who is looking for a large, stunning girl to love and take care for. For more information about Pixie, please email:

cats@almosthomefoundation.org

Adopt, don't shop! Let's keep spreading the word!



Ask Homer and Hope



Homer and Hope, how can we keep our pets cool in the hot summer months?

Cats can't sweat like humans can so that makes them more vulnerable to high temperatures. Humans' temperature averages about 98.6 while cats average 101-102.5. This means that if your house temperature exceeds 80 degrees your cat is susceptible to heat exhaustion and possible heat stroke. Of course, senior cats and cats with preexisting medical conditions need to be kept cool at all costs.

Here are some suggestions for helping your cat stay cool. Be sure to keep plenty of water available for him around the house. You could even make him ice treats by freezing some water from a can of tuna or some chicken stock in a popsicle mold. How about letting him play with ice cubes. It's a lot of fun and it cools down his paws, which is where he absorbs and loses heat.

Keep your cat groomed as excess fur holds in heat. Think about putting a cooling pad in his bed and of course having fans in the house always helps.

Bet you never thought of this. When looking for a nice cool breeze, those curious cats can fall out of an open window causing serious injuries. So, make sure your screens are in place.

Too hot for Spot

Dog paws and dog paw pads, even though they are a tough specialized type of skin, can suffer from burns just the same way that our hands and feet do. Remember being a kid and having bare feet on hot asphalt? Believe it or not, when the air temperature outside is 77° the asphalt temperature is 125°!

Here are some suggestions to avoid your dog burning his paws. Walk your dog on grass or just go out early in the morning when the temperature is cooler. There are products like dog leggings and dog booties that are available for purchase. There's even a product called paw protection wax that is designed to form a barrier that protects your pet's feet from burning, bleeding, or cracking while walking on hot or rugged ground. Most importantly, test for a safe temperature when you're going out. Place the back of your hand on the asphalt. If you cannot hold it there for at least 5 seconds, it's too hot for your dog to walk on!

Dogs don't sweat as we do. While they do sweat through their paw pads, that's not the main way they cool themselves. Dogs regulate their temperature through panting. Moisture in their tongues, nasal passages and lining of their lungs evaporates. As this air circulates through their body, it helps keep them cool.

Here are several suggestions to help keep your dog cool. Most importantly, keep him hydrated! Place water bowls throughout the house so he has easy access. You can even put ice cubes in the water. To help with hydration, you can give your dog fruits or veggies that are predominately water. Some high-water-content options include cucumbers, zucchini, celery, watermelon, apples, or peaches. Make cooling treats. There's lots of recipes on line for popsicles.

If you are outside, remember a wet dog is a cool dog. Let him run through a sprinkler or purchase a kiddie pool and fill it with a few inches of water so he can step in and cool himself. Walk your dog in early morning or after the hottest part of the day. Never leave a dog in a hot car.

If your dog is restless or bored, try some treat puzzles, brain games or refresh their basic training. This can keep their brain stimulated without increasing their body temperature.

If you are inside, use a fan to give him a cool breeze or air conditioning. Equipment such as cooling mats, cooling coats, cooling harnesses and collars can provide long-lasting cooling effects. These are activated with water. When the moisture evaporates it draws out the heat from the dog's body. For a similar effect without making a purchase, freezer blocks or packs, or even a frozen bottle of water, wrapped in a towel or blanket can be used by placing this in your dog's bed.

How to exercise your dog safely in hot weather

The thermostat climbs and you think it’s just too hot to exercise outside with your fur buddy. However, skipping the daily walks, fetch games and other activities may leave your dog an extra burst of energy causing him to get into things he shouldn’t. He’ll be bugging you to play, bringing his toys to you, chewing your socks and furniture, etc.

So what can you do to cool his exuberance and get him to safely exercise in hot weather? There are several things to be considered when contemplating how to handle outside activities. How much heat will his breed, size, weight, age and health allow him to withstand. When looking at the heat, take the humidity into account also.

We can go outdoors if we do so at the times of day that are usually the coolest. That’s early morning and late evening. At those times we may get in some vigorous ball chasing or a nice long walk. Walk in the shade. Be mindful of how hot the surfaces he’ll be walking on are. Subject them to the “5 Second Test.” Put your bare hand or foot on the surface for 5 seconds. If it’s too hot for you, it’ll be too hot for your dog’s paws. Cross streets in the shade whenever possible. Take shorter walks, staying close to home. Put a cooling vest on him which are available at local pet stores or on the internet.

Bring a portable dish and cool water (NOT cold water) for him. Do not let him drink from puddles or water bowls people leave out. Do not let him drink from ponds or rivers, etc., as they may contain highly toxic blue-green algae. If you have a swimming pool you can let him swim if he wants.

If it’s too hot out, you can take him to a pet store or local mall if they allow pets. They do have rules so check them out before going. Make sure your dog is fully vaccinated. Or you can keep him in your cool house and play interactive games with him.

Watch for signs of overheating.



SYMPTOMS	FIRST AID
<p>Vomiting, Excessive panting, Foaming at the mouth, Bright red gums, Confusion, Weakness, Collapse, Shaking, Diarrhea, Seizures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Call your vet immediately -Move to a cool shaded area -Let them drink small amounts of water -Pour room temperature water over their body -Never use icy cold water as this can cause shock

And do not trust your dog to know he is overheated, as dogs are like kids. Even though he seems to be having a grand time chasing that ball, if he exhibits the above symptoms of heatstroke, take action to cool him off immediately.

Pool safety tips

We’ve all heard of the “doggie paddle” but not all breeds of dogs can swim. So before you let Fido into the pool, check into his breed to see if he is physically built to float. If you do want Fido in the pool, here’s some steps to follow.

The AKC recommends that you carry him into the pool and lower him into the water gently. He may be unsure of what to do next, so you can help him swim to the steps, praising him for his efforts. Guide your dog a bit further into the pool, then assist him back towards the steps. With some practice, your dog will start swimming for the exit on his own. The AKC also suggests putting him in the pool from different points and guiding him towards the exit. Knowing how to get out of the water will help eliminate panic in case of an accidental fall.

If your dog seems to thrive in the water, you are all set to go. If he seems a bit unsure after the first introduction to the pool, try again next time. Even if your pal is a strong swimmer, you can never know when an emergency situation may arise. By always keeping an eye on your dog while playing in or around the pool, you can be sure he is safe.

Why do dogs eat grass

Dogs seem to be obsessed with grass! They sniff it, rub noses in it, roll in it, and lie in it to feel the coolness rising from the ground. Most of them even eat it now and then for various reasons ranging from minor to serious.

Perhaps canine grass eating is instinctive, just part of doggy DNA. In the wild, dogs ate their prey, consuming the necessary nutrients to keep them alive. Domesticated dogs have a variety of diet plans including grain free that may not provide the fiber necessary for healthy digestion and elimination. To relieve this distress, dogs eat grass to vomit or to flush out whatever is causing the stomach upset.

Pica, the eating of non-food items, might also explain grass eating. Some dogs enjoy the taste of fresh grass, although owners should be aware that other dogs may have left parasites there. Even more dangerous, lawns treated with herbicides and insecticides will poison dogs through ingestion. Boredom is another possible reason for grass eating. What better way to get the owner's attention than to stop and seek comfort from chewing grass?

Grass is not the best treat because of potential ground and fecal residue ingested while eating, and if possible, dog owners should discourage the habit. Dogs need supervision, exercise, stimulation, and positive reinforcement; they need a well-balanced diet with adequate fiber intake, chewing alternatives, and regular parasite medication. If grass eating becomes habitual, a vet should be consulted to determine possible medical reasons.

Fun Facts did you know

Our dogs get much thirstier than we do when they get hot, and other than panting and drinking, they really have no way to cool themselves down.

Cats groom themselves to keep cool. As they groom during hot weather, their saliva evaporates off of their fur, cooling them down just like evaporating sweat cools us.

Protect your pet from the stress of fireworks

Here we are in the summer of 2024 which may be an especially difficult summer for noise phobic dogs. For in addition to fireworks, we're facing the year of the very loud Cicada.

Noise phobias, in general, are not that uncommon. Even the biggest, bravest guard dog may run for cover when he hears a sound as soft and harmless as the bell announcing an email on your computer or a text on your phone. He may panic if someone drops an object that hits the floor with a bang, or runs a vacuum cleaner or other noisy appliance. Then along comes summer with the 4th of July holiday, always surrounded by those frightful fireworks. And he's smart to be afraid as fireworks can be very dangerous, possibly causing fires where they alight, or physical harm to whatever they land on.

It's best to bring your dog inside, be very calm, and give him a safe haven to escape the noise. A cage or piece of furniture to hide in, covered by a blanket would be helpful. Turn on the television, radio or some music loud enough to hide the noise that has frightened him. Make sure he is secure so he can't get out of the house or yard. This holiday is one that sees the greatest number of dogs lost by escaping the house or yard to seek refuge from the fireworks.

Have a plan in place ahead of time. Ask your vet for advice on dealing with your phobic dog. He may prescribe what is called an "in-the-moment" drug for short-term applications. There are also "thunder shirts" you can purchase on the internet or at your local pet store. Thunder shirts hug the dog's body, calming him.

By the way, summer 2024 is bringing on another possible irritant to some phobic dogs...it's the year of the Cicadas. Thousands of them will appear to sing their very loud songs. They are otherwise harmless, and do not sting or bite. However, your dog might get an upset tummy if he eats too many of them. Don't worry, though, they only hang around for a few weeks. And some dogs might not even notice them.