



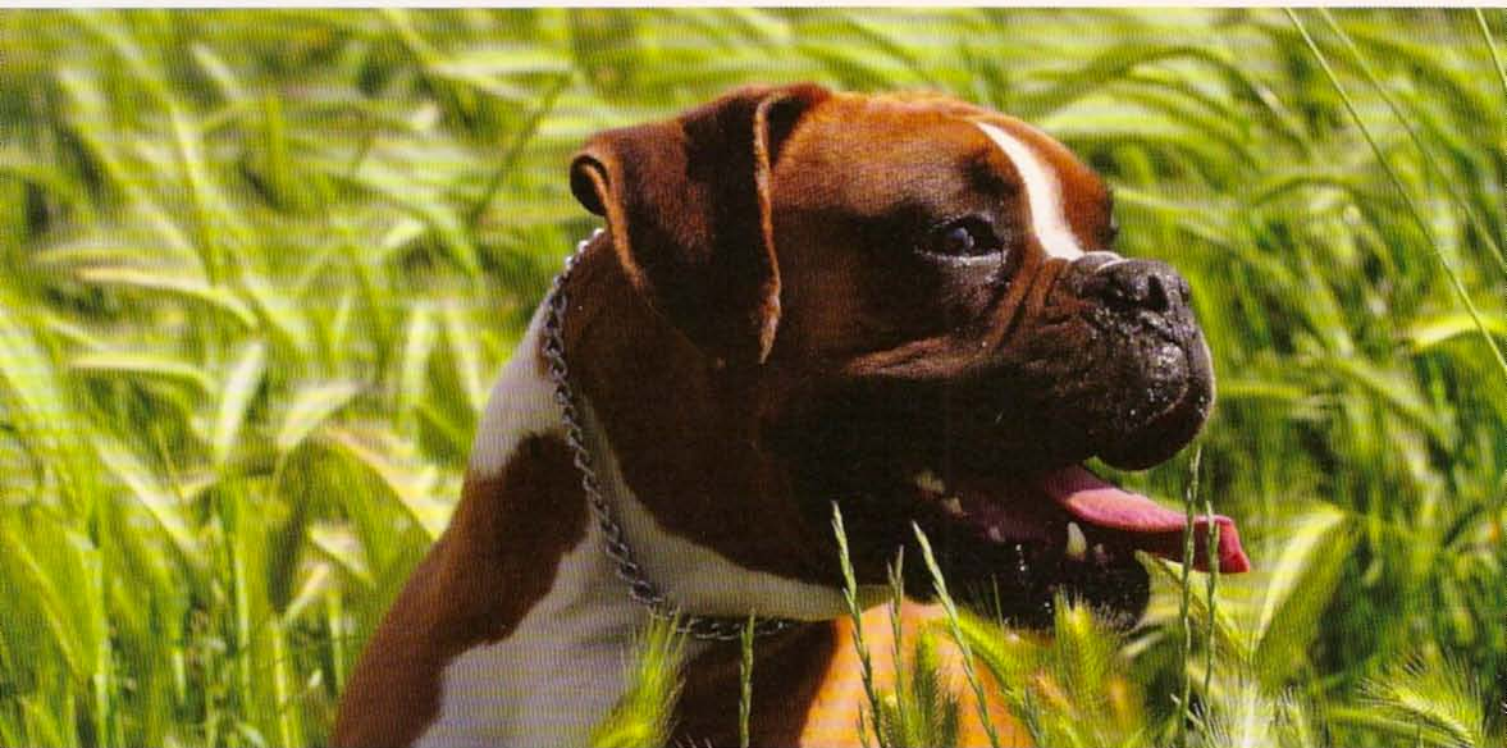
COOL

him off



Heat stroke can strike your dog quickly, especially on humid summer days. Learn how acupressure can help stabilize him.

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It can happen in a flash and it doesn't even have to be that hot out. Your dog can be fine one minute, gleefully running in the midday sun – then suddenly he's frantically panting and progressing towards heat stroke.

Dogs have very limited ways of ridding themselves of body heat. They do not have sweat glands on their bodies like we do. They expel heat primarily through the respiratory system, and some from small sweat glands in their foot pads and on their noses. Dogs most at risk for heat exhaustion are heavy coated or overweight dogs,

those with a large body mass, very young puppies and older dogs. Canines with short, flat noses (brachycephalic) such as boxers, mastiffs, Pekinese and bulldogs are also susceptible.

It's important to realize, however, that any dog can experience heat stroke when the weather's hot, especially if the humidity is high. It is up to you to be conscientious about keeping your dog cool, hydrated and well ventilated, and to avoid vigorous exercise on hot and muggy days.

Danger signs

Heat stroke occurs when a dog's body can no longer control its own heat. Indicators tend to follow a progression from mild to severe:

- Loud, frantic panting
- Temperature over 103°F
- Elevated heart rate
- Agitation
- Excessive, frothy salivation
- Dark purple gums
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Muscle cramping
- Seizure-like tremors
- Weakness
- Dazed and disoriented
- Loss of balance
- Collapse
- Loss of consciousness
- Death

Unfortunately, the outcome of severe heat stroke is usually not good. If the dog does survive, he will most likely sustain permanent organ and even brain damage. It's important to do what you can to prevent heat exhaustion by avoiding exertion on hot days and making sure your dog has access to shade and fresh water. But heat stroke can still happen inadvertently: here's what to do if it does.

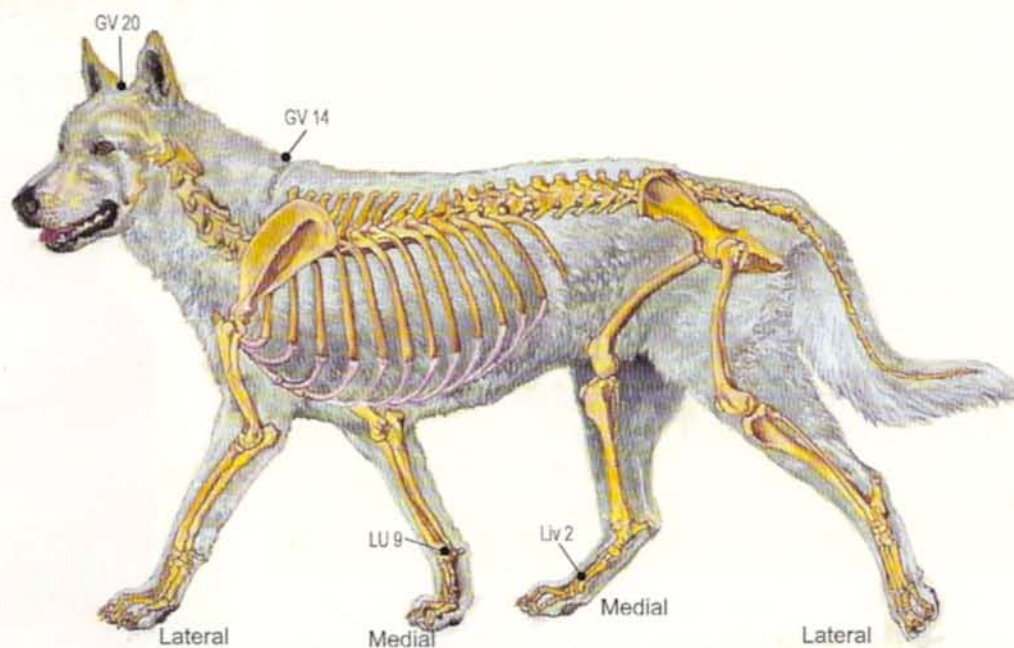
The cooling process

If a dog's body temperature edges near or above 103°F, he has entered the danger zone. (The normal temperature for a dog is 100°F to 102.5°F.) Stop all activity, offer fresh water, wet the dog down with cool water and allow him to rest in a breezy, shaded area if you are outside. If you're inside, put him in front of a fan or in air conditioning. Evaporative cooling is a good way to help your dog bring down his body temperature.

Applying ice or extremely cold water while cooling a dog is not recommended. The extreme cold can cause his skin to contract and not allow the heat to escape. Covering the dog with a wet towel can also capture body heat.

Once you have begun the cool-down process, you can stimulate specific acupressure points (also called acupoints) to enhance the dog's ability to expel body heat. While doing so, do not confine the dog, and continue to provide ventilation. Take him to the veterinarian as soon as possible to make sure no internal damage has occurred.

If the dog's temperature goes over 105°F, he is in grave danger and immediate veterinary care is necessary. Quickly follow this cooling process: wet the dog completely and spray cool water on his neck and groin, where blood vessels are superficial. While en route to the emergency veterinary clinic, stimulate the following acupressure points to increase your dog's capacity to release heat.



Acupoints for releasing body heat

These acupoints have been specifically selected to help the dog release internal body heat. They also support respiratory function and assist in calming the animal.

Governing Vessel 14 (GV 14) – commonly used to clear heat from the entire body. Located on the midline of the dog at the base of the neck in front of the shoulder blades (scapula).

Governing Vessel 20 (GV20) – clears heat, thus helping the dog release heat. It also clears and calms the dog's mind. Will help reduce his anxiety while he struggles to cool down. GV 20 is located at the very top of the dog's head, on the midline between his ears.

Liver 2 (Liv 2) – a known acupoint for cooling blood heat and calming the heart. It's on the hind paws right on top of the webbing between the first and second digits (seen from the medial, or inside).

Lung 9 (Lu 9) – a key acupressure point that supports lung function, clears heat and promotes the vital energy of the

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To be most effective in cooling and helping the dog breathe, lightly scratch each of these acupoints using your index and middle fingers.

arteries. All the attributes of Lung 9 can greatly benefit a dog suffering from any level of heat stroke. This point is located on the forelimbs, just above the wrist on the inside, or medial aspect, toward the front of the leg.

To be most effective in cooling and helping the dog breathe, lightly scratch each of these acupoints using your index and middle fingers. Have the hand that is not scratching the point rest gently and comfortably on the dog's body. If at any time he moves away or seems in more distress, discontinue the acupressure. Follow your vet's recommendations.

During the hot summer months, watch for the mildest signs that your dog is overheating. Remember to wet him down and keep him in the shade and well ventilated at the first indication he is getting too hot. Acupressure will help bring his heat level down more quickly, and support his health. 🐾