

## Winter Safety Tips

1. Cats and dogs need protection from wet and cold both inside and outside your home. Cats should stay indoors during the winter, as they are extremely vulnerable to snow, ice and extreme cold. The best way to protect your dog from the harsh elements is to keep him inside, except for supervised walks on a leash.
2. Long-haired dogs should not be outside for more than 20 minutes in very cold weather. They are just as susceptible to sudden temperature changes as you are.
3. Animals can suffer from frostbite and hypothermia even in early winter. Frostbite is most common on your pet's paws. Symptoms of frostbite may not appear until a couple of days after exposure. Signs to watch for are swollen paws and your pet fussing over the area. **If this happens, take your pet to your veterinarian immediately.** On the way, wrap your pet in dry warm blankets and apply a warm (not hot) water bottle to the affected area.
4. If your dog is outside with you a lot in the winter, he will need more calories to produce body heat, so increase the amount you feed him. If your pet gets very little exercise during the winter, decrease his calorie intake to avoid excess weight gain.
5. Antifreeze tastes good to pets, but it is a deadly poison. Keep an eye out for antifreeze puddles. **If you suspect your pet has ingested antifreeze, rush him to your veterinarian immediately.** The most likely source of the poison is a radiator drainage spot in a garage or parking area, which should be flushed with water immediately.
6. When you are outside with your pet, watch out for chemicals used to melt snow on sidewalks, as they irritate your pet's paws. Always remember to wipe his paws with a wet cloth after an outing and remove the ice between his paw pads. If your dog's paws look sore or irritated, apply a thin coat of petroleum jelly. You can also purchase commercial boots to protect his paws from the elements.
7. Slap the hood of your car or honk the horn a few times before starting the engine on cold days to startle any animals sleeping under your car. Cats may crawl up under your car seeking shelter and warmth near the engine. They may become caught in the fan belt and suffer serious injury when someone starts the engine.

**Remember,  
if it's too cold for you to go outside,  
then it's too cold for your pet.**

