

Take care of man's best friend around the pool

December 30 2014, by Hayley Mayne



Veterinarians from the Murdoch University Veterinary Hospital are reminding pet owners to take care of dogs around swimming pools this summer.

Lecturer in Small Animal Emergency Medicine and Critical Care, Dr Melissa Claus, said that many [dog owners](#) don't realise that they need to be watching out for their pets when it comes to safety around water.

"There is always a risk of [dogs](#) drowning when they have access to [swimming pools](#)," Dr Claus said.

"Pet owners often believe dogs have a natural ability to swim, but this is

not always true.

"Some dogs paddle better than others and some dogs sink like a stone. Generally, heavy dogs with short legs and dogs with very skinny legs and small feet tend to find swimming a real challenge.

"Similar to children, pets should never be left unsupervised around deep water."

Dr Claus recommends that families, who want their dogs to swim in the pool, first teach their pets how to get out of the pool. Otherwise a dog may jump in and then panic when they can't pull themselves out of the pool.

"Unsecured solar pool blankets can also be a hazard, as dogs falling into the water can get trapped and disoriented making it hard for them to find the steps to get out of the pool," Dr Claus said.

"In addition, the weight of the blanket can push them under the water.

"The fenced pool area should not be used as a dog yard but if they have to be in the pool area, ensure that the pool blanket is off or a secure cover or netting is used to cover the pool and prevent them from falling in."

Dr Claus said if your dog is old, has a heart condition or a seizure disorder it is best to keep them away from the pool altogether.

Additionally, if taking your dog on a boat, a doggie life jacket is recommended if they not strong swimmers.

If a dog is involved in a near drowning incident it is important to see veterinary assistance.

"Complications including hypothermia, pneumonia or fluid build-up in the lungs can occur," Dr Claus said.

Provided by Murdoch University

Citation: Take care of man's best friend around the pool (2014, December 30) retrieved 18 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-12-friend-pool.html>

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