

Vet Viewpoint: Hot Sidewalks and Allergies

Written by Dr. Florez

Monday, 16 November 2009 16:03 - Last Updated Monday, 04 July 2011 06:44

Dear Dr. Florez,

I live in AZ and I see that you do too. I often see people walking dogs across the hot concrete and asphalt in the summer and I don't think that's good for the pets. My question is: how hot is too hot? How do you tell when it's too hot to walk on the pavement? Are paws less sensitive? Also, my girlfriend is allergic to my dog. I've tried some different shampoos, but I was wondering if there was something that will help my dog shed less. I have a Labrador mix.

Thanks in advance,
Arlo



Dear Arlo,

I always want to see someone try to walk on concrete without shoes at 1 pm in Phoenix, AZ just as they expect their pets to do so. It is important to walk your dogs very early in the morning and to always bring water. If your schedule does not allow this, then wait until the late evening hours. This will allow the pavement to cool down a bit.

If adjusting your walking schedule is not something that you can do, there is always the option purchasing your pet some "doggie boots." These boots are designed to protect your pet's paws from the heat of the pavement, and also provide an extra layer of safety against broken glass and other hazards.

In regards to your girlfriend's allergies: people are allergic to the saliva from their dogs, not to the pet hair. When animals clean themselves, they transfer this saliva to their coats. Giving your pets cold baths in plain water will help close your pets pores, and will not remove too much oil from your pets skin as regular warm baths with shampoo will do. If you choose to bathe your pet, you should supplement your dog's diet with fatty acids, such as Omegas 3 and 6, as well as fish oils, to help preserve the oils in your pets coat. This will also help your dog to shed less.

Your girlfriend should also be seen by a physician and/or allergist to determine the true origin of her allergies by way of a blood test. It is possible to desensitize her against a number of

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allergies, such as allergies to dogs, and there are a number of new pharmaceuticals available that will help ease her suffering.

Good luck!

Diego Fernando Florez, DVM