

Tips On Hiking, Camping And Swimming With Your Dog

(NAPSA)—Spending time with your dog in the great outdoors can be even more fun if you remember to protect your pet.

Here are some tips from the experts at Novartis Animal Health US, Inc. to keep your dog safe while enjoying such activities as camping, hiking and swimming:

Camping and hiking

- Before going camping, make sure your dog is current on vaccines and a parasite preventive, and that you take along proof of rabies vaccination. Without proper protection, pets and family members may be in danger of internal parasites that pets can pick up.

- Take along a good flea and tick preventive.

- Make sure your pet has ID.

- Get your dog in condition before hiking and camping by taking him on shorter hikes close to home.

- Check beforehand that dogs are allowed on trails and at parks and campgrounds.

- Bring along sunblock. Dogs can get sunburn. Dogs that have recently received short haircuts are at a greater risk.

- Medium or large dogs can carry a backpack with unbreakable items. Just remember not to use a backpack on dogs under 1 year of age or on any dog with health problems.

- Check your dog's foot pads every day for thistles or soreness. Check for ticks.

- Bring along plenty of bottled water since your dog will need to drink more when he is more active. Dogs have a higher internal body temperature than humans and get warmer at lower temperatures.

- Don't let your dog wander off. He may eat poisonous berries or mushrooms.



Protect your dog by making sure his vaccinations are up to date.

Swimming

- Most dogs enjoy a swim. Dogs are best introduced to water early in life in a quiet place with shallow water.

- Never force a dog into water and don't let him go too deep. Belly deep is enough. A dog can jump into deep water and not be able to get out. Even in a swimming pool, a dog may not be able to figure out how to get out. If your pool has graded steps, you can teach your dog how to get out of the pool.

- Sand and salt water can irritate paw pads, so rinse paws after visiting the beach. Dry out ears immediately.

- Use an oral flea preventive. Wet flea collars can irritate the skin and active ingredients will wash off.

For more information on pets, visit www.growingupwithpets.com.