

## HEAT STROKE SAFETY CHART

Heat stroke in a greyhound can happen quickly and without warning. Please refer to this chart if you have any questions whether the temperature and/or humidity could present an unsafe environment for your hound.

Seniors and hounds with medical conditions should be monitored closely for heat stress when conditions exist in the yellow shaded areas.

Outside time for all greyhounds when temp/humidity is in the yellow shaded areas should be limited to six minutes or less.

No greyhound should be allowed outside to run or play when the temp/humidity is in the Red areas. If you have to walk your hound for a potty break, get out and back in quickly. Do not linger outside; even with no vigorous activity, a greyhound can become overheated quickly, which can lead to heat stress or heat stroke.

HUMIDITY	TEMPERTURE				
	80 F	85 F	90 F	95 F	100 F
20%	77	82	87	93	99
25%	77	83	88	94	101
30%	78	84	90	96	104
35%	79	85	91	98	107
40%	79	86	93	101	110
45%	80	87	95	104	115
50%	81	88	96	107	120
55%	81	89	98	110	126
60%	82	90	100	114	132
65%	83	91	102	119	138
70%	85	93	106	124	144
75%	86	95	109	130	
80%	86	97	113	136	
85%	87	99	114		
90%	88	102	122		
95%	90	105			
100%	91	106			

With temperatures soon to be in the 90s and higher, we want to share a word of caution regarding greyhounds and heatstroke. Particularly a word of caution when participating in outside activities (walking your greyhound, running your greyhound and just hanging out outdoors). Houston Humidity and high temperatures and the fact that greyhounds are sensitive to the heat is the reason GPA-Houston typically suspends all officially sponsored outside events in the hot summer months (mid-May – mid September):

### **Heatstroke (Hyperthermia)**

Heatstroke occurs when normal body mechanisms cannot keep the body's temperature in a safe range. Animals do not have efficient cooling systems (like humans who sweat) and get overheated easily. A dog with moderate heatstroke (body temperature from 104-106 degrees F) can recover within an hour if given prompt first aid and veterinary care (normal body temperature is 100-102.5 degrees F). Severe heatstroke (body temperature over 106 degrees F) can be deadly and immediate veterinary assistance is needed.

#### **A dog suffering from heatstroke will display several signs that may include:**

- *Rapid panting*
- *Bright red tongue*
- *Red or pale gums*
- *Thick, sticky saliva*
- *Depression*
- *Weakness*
- *Dizziness*
- *Vomiting (sometimes with blood)*
- *Diarrhea*
- *Shock*
- *Coma*

#### **What you should do . . .**

Remove the dog from the hot area immediately. Prior to taking him to your veterinarian, lower his temperature by wetting him thoroughly with cool water (for very small dogs, use lukewarm water), then increase air movement around him with a fan. **CAUTION:** Using very cold water actually can be counterproductive. Cooling too quickly and especially allowing his body temperature to become too low can cause other life-threatening medical conditions. The rectal temperature should be checked every 5 minutes. Once the body temperature is 103 degrees F, the cooling measures should be stopped, and the dog should be dried thoroughly and covered so he does not continue to lose heat. Even if the dog appears to be recovering, take him to your veterinarian as soon as possible. He should still be examined since he may be dehydrated or have other complications.

Allow free access to water or a children's rehydrating solution if the dog can drink on his own. Do not try to force-feed cold water; the dog may inhale it or choke.

#### **What your veterinarian will do . . .**

Your veterinarian will lower your dog's body temperature to a safe range (if you have not already) and continually monitor his temperature. Your dog will be given fluids and, possibly, oxygen. He will be monitored for shock, respiratory distress, kidney failure, heart abnormalities, and other complications and treated accordingly. Blood samples may be taken before and during the treatment. The clotting time of the blood will be monitored since clotting problems are a common complication.

#### **Aftercare . . .**

Dogs with moderate heatstroke often recover without complicating health problems. Severe heatstroke can cause organ damage that might need ongoing care such as a special diet prescribed by your veterinarian. Dogs who suffer from heatstroke once increase the risk for doing it again, and steps must be taken to prevent it on hot, humid days.

## Prevention . . .

- Any pet that cannot cool himself off is at risk for heatstroke. Following these guidelines can help prevent serious problems.
- Keep pets with pre-existing conditions like heart disease, obesity, older age, or breathing problems cool and in the shade. **Even normal activity for these pets can be harmful.**
- Provide access to water at all times.
- **Do not leave your pet in a hot parked car even if you're in the shade or will only be gone a short time. The temperature inside a parked car can quickly reach up to 140 degrees F.**
- Make sure outside dogs have access to shade.
- **On a hot day, restrict exercise, and don't take your dog jogging with you. Too much exercise when the weather is very hot can be dangerous.**
- Avoid places like the beach and especially concrete or asphalt areas where heat is reflected and there is no access to shade.
- Wetting down your dog with cool water or allowing him to swim can help maintain a normal body temperature.
- Move your dog to a cool area of the house. Air conditioning is one of the best ways to keep a dog cool but is not always dependable. To provide a cooler environment, freeze water in soda bottles or place ice and a small amount of water in several resealable food storage bags, then wrap them in a towel or tube sock. Place them on the floor for the dog to lay on.

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**IF YOU ARE IN DOUBT ABOUT ANY OF THE ABOVE WARNINGS, PLEASE CONSULT  
A GREYHOUND KNOWLEDGEABLE VETERINARIAN.**