



# HEAT STRESS FACT SHEET

Heat stress is a serious condition that is caused by a significant rise in the body temperature of the greyhound.



Dogs can not sweat like humans to regulate their body temperature and so their ability to regulate temperature has its limitations. Therefore, heat stress can quickly escalate in a greyhound and become worse in a short space of time if not attended to and can be fatal.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF MY GREYHOUND IS SUFFERING FROM HEAT STRESS?

Understanding the symptoms of heat stress is crucial for early diagnosis and treatment. These include:

- excessive salivating;
- weakness;
- lethargy;
- shaking;
- dry nose and gums;
- constant panting.

In severe cases of heat stress, you may notice:

- dark coloured tongue;
- vomiting;
- seizures.

## WHAT DO I DO IN THE EVENT OF HEAT STRESS?

If your greyhound is showing any of the above signs, it is important to seek immediate veterinary advice. If there is any doubt as to whether your greyhound is suffering from heat stress, you must consult with the OTV as soon as symptoms present.

Actions you can take to assist in the treatment of heat stress include:

- stop all exercise;
- move to a shaded area or, ideally, into an air-conditioned area;
- provide plenty of cool, fresh water;
- provide plenty of ventilation to move evaporated fluid away and to drop the humidity levels.

Gently cool the greyhound – they can lay on wet towels, be wiped down or hosed gently with cool water.

*Make sure if you are using wet towels or 'Cooling Coats' that they feel cool to touch and that there is a breeze or ventilation as these methods rely on evaporation for their cooling effects too – if they dry out or there is no ventilation then it's similar to wearing a blanket or rug.*

*Avoid using iced water on the greyhound's body as this can cause the blood vessels in the skin to contract, which will slow the cooling process down because the hot blood is no longer coming to the surface where it can lose heat.*

Iced water can be used on the feet though, and covered ice packs can be placed in between the dog's thighs and in their 'arm-pits'.