

GREYHOUNDS FIBRINOLYTIC SYNDROME

It has been reported that up to 30 per cent of greyhounds suffer from a bleeding disorder that can be potentially life threatening. Greyhound fibrinolytic syndrome is also known as “delayed bleeding” as bleeding generally occurs 36 to 48 hours after a surgical procedure or injury. Bleeding problems can range in severity from bruising, bleeding from wounds to severe or life-threatening internal bleeding. It often manifests as skin bruising, extending from a surgical wound to surrounding areas, which can persist for days. In some cases, this can be associated with active bleeding from wounds and delayed sloughing of skin and underlying tissues.

What causes fibrinolytic syndrome?

It is not known why greyhounds, in particular, suffer from this bleeding disorder or which greyhounds will be affected. To increase the mystery, some greyhounds will show no bleeding tendencies with one surgical procedure but may exhibit fibrinolysis associated with subsequent surgeries.

Bleeding can be associated with a number of factors – in simple terms these are: abnormal stabilisation of blood clots and enhanced clot breakdown or a deficiency in factors that form clots. Blood vessel damage or dysfunction can also be involved in bleeding disorders.

In affected greyhounds, commonly measured blood values and clotting times are normal. It is unknown why affected dogs exhibit bleeding tendencies. It is generally thought that the bleeding is related to enhanced fibrinolysis (clot breakdown) or weaker clot strength.



What does this mean for you and your greyhound?

You simply need to be aware, plan ahead whenever possible by taking pre-emptive measures if your greyhound undergoes an operation and know what to look for post the operation.

As delayed bleeding appears to be related to the maintenance of the fibrin clot and enhanced fibrinolysis, if your greyhound requires surgery your vet will most likely recommend pre-emptive administration of antifibrinolytic medications preoperatively and the immediate postoperative period.

The antifibrinolytic medication commonly used is called tranexamic acid. It decreases fibrinolysis and increases clot strength making bleeding less likely. While this helps to reduce the severity and frequency of bleeding, delayed bleeding may still occur in some patients and is something you as a greyhound owner will need to be aware of. If your greyhound is injured or scheduled in for surgery, please discuss your concerns with your veterinarian and ensure you have a management plan in place if any concerns arise.

