

WHEN A “HOT” CAR IS NOT A GOOD THING
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When you hear the term “hot” car you may think of a Camaro, Mustang or Challenger. However, a hot car for your child or dog is not a good thing. With the temperatures rising, our attention to our children and pets needs to also rise.

When can hyperthermia occur?

It can occur even in 70 degree weather, as the vehicle can still quickly reach life-threatening temperatures. 67 percent of the heat rise occurs in the first 30 minutes. Cracking the windows had little effect in helping to keep the temperature from rising. Also the darker the interior color the more heat increase occurs.

The temperature rises as follows:

10 minutes – 19 degrees	20 minutes 29 degrees	30 minutes 34 degrees
60 minutes – 43 degrees	1 – 2 hours 45 – 50 degrees	

What is the most common age group for vehicular hyperthermia deaths?

75 percent of the deaths were children under the age of 2. Children’s thermoregulatory systems are not as efficient as an adults and their body temperatures warm at a rate 3 to 5 times faster than an adult. A core temperature of 107 degrees is considered lethal as internal organs shut down.

What appears to be most common cause of why the child was left in the vehicle?

Since airbags have become popular, and children are placed in the back seat, the fatality rate from vehicular hyperthermia has increased ten-fold. This is due to the fact that 52 percent of the cases involve children being forgotten by their caregivers.

What can be done to prevent vehicular hyperthermia?

- 1. Never leave a child unattended in a vehicle, not even for a few minutes.**
- 2. Keep a stuffed animal in the carseat and when the child is put in the seat place the animal in front with the driver.**
- 3. Or place your purse, cell phone or briefcase in the back seat as a reminder that you have your child in the vehicle**
- 4. Make look before you leave a routine when you get out of the vehicle.**
- 5. Have a plan that your childcare provider will call you if your child does not arrive.**
- 6. If you see a child unattended in a hot vehicle call 9-1-1.**

Remember your child and pet are counting on you to do the right thing.

Information for this article was obtained from the Department of Geosciences at ggweather.com and Sisters of Invention at sistersofinvention.com.