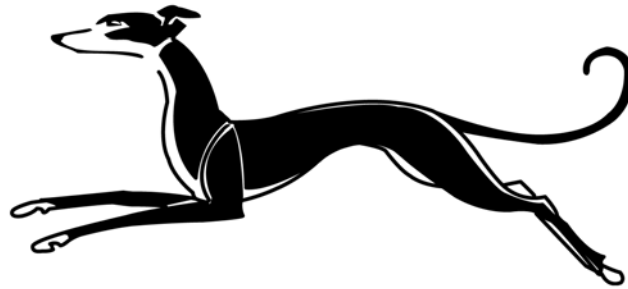


*friends of greyhounds*



*WELCOME TO THE FAMILY*

*A Manual for Greyhound Adopters*

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*(Rev. 4/05)*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*This manual is based upon and adapted from a manual for Greyhound adopters developed by our friends at Greyhound Pets of America – Atlanta, Southeastern Greyhound Adoption who in turn received help from Greyhound Options, Inc. in Massachusetts. The cooperation and interaction of Greyhound Rescue groups all over the world is an important part of the work we do. Thank you to all the people and groups who encourage us every week to keep chipping away at a seemingly endless job. The revisions and updates in the manual are the contributions of our many volunteers.*

*Thank you, one and all!*

This manual is based on experience and observation. It is not meant to be a substitute for good veterinary advice. Should there be a conflict between this manual and your veterinarian's opinion, please share our information but follow the vet's recommendations.

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## THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL ADOPTION

*Congratulations, you have brought home a splendid companion and friend. And, thank you. You have helped the volunteers of Friends of Greyhounds save the life of an outstanding canine athlete.*

*The information and advice in this Manual for Greyhound Adopters is, we believe, essential to assisting you in keeping the commitment you made in your adoption agreement to take good care of the Greyhound for the rest of its natural life. It is drawn from the years of experience of volunteers and Greyhound adoption groups who have helped thousands of racing Greyhounds make the transition from track and kennel life to home pet life.*

*Those of you who have owned dogs most of their lives may be tempted to think that “a dog is a dog” and that previous experience with other dogs is a good substitute for following the guidelines in this manual. Please trust us – racing Greyhounds have been bred, raised, trained, and kept like no other breed of dog. Their unique background is part of what makes them such wonderful pets, but it also creates a few challenges as they transition from one “career” to another.*

*“He is your friend, your partner, your defender, your dog. You are his life, his love, his leader. He will be yours, faithful and true, to the last beat of his heart. You owe it to him to be worthy of such devotion.”*

*Author unknown*

*If you will follow the advice in this manual and contact us early and often to help with problems as they arrive, we can, together, decrease the chances of an unhappy adoption. The return of a greyhound is a “no win” situation for everyone involved – it is an emotional wrench for the adopter, it requires FoG to find a kennel for the dog displacing another greyhound which could have been brought from the track, and it is difficult for the former racer, who must make yet another transition into a new home.*

*We recognize that some returns are unavoidable, but we believe that many returns can be prevented with a healthy mixture of adherence to the guidelines in the manual, commitment, patience, and love. We can assure you that your time and effort in working with your new greyhound will be repaid many times over with unconditional love and affection!*

*As you welcome your new greyhound to the Family, we welcome you to the Friends of Greyhounds Family. We're here to support you and guide you every step of the way. Go ahead - fall in love!*



## CHAPTER 1 - THE FIRST FEW DAYS

### A. The Greyhound Starter Kit

*The Greyhound Starter Kit consists of those items we suggest you obtain before you bring your Greyhound home. Having these items on hand when you bring your new companion home will make life a little easier for both of you, and will let you spend your time helping your former racer transition into your home rather than running around shopping for supplies. Most all of these items can be purchased from local pet supply stores, such as PetSmart or Pet Supermarket. For those who are planning in advance we've included an appendix of telephone and web addresses for some of the catalog vendors, too.*

**1. The Crate.** *A crate is strongly recommended. Although many adopters object to crating their new "baby", look at this from the dog's point of view. Racing Greyhounds sleep and eat in crates in their racing kennels, and many will consider the crate their own personal space in which to relax in your home. It may be one of the best investments you can make toward easy housebreaking and dealing with separation anxiety. After the initial transition period, crates can come in handy while traveling with your Greyhound, or to confine him while he is ill.*

*There are basically two kinds of crates: the plastic variety, known as an airline crate or Vari-Kennel, and the metal or wire crate. Each has its own advantages.*

*Recommended  
Metal Crate Size:  
26" W x 42" D x  
30"H*

*The airline type of kennel is slightly less expensive (about \$70 dollars and up) and more "den-like". These offer greater protection should there be an accident while traveling but tend to be stuffy for household use. The extra large size (approximately 27"W x 40"D x 30") is appropriate for all but the biggest males.*

*The metal crate is our personal preference for household use. It is available in a variety of styles and even colors. In a metal crate the 26"W x 42"D x 30"H is about the right size. You might be able to use the next size down for a small female but the difference in price may not be worth the difference in comfort for the dog. If you are going to keep the crate for use occasionally, consider getting the folding style crate. Although it is more expensive (about \$150), the convenience is worth it. These crates are also available in side door models which may fit your floor plan better, too.*

## Summary of the Great Crate

### Options:

\* Ask friends and see if you can borrow a large wire crate.

\* Purchase a crate from FoG for \$80. We will deliver and set up the crate when we bring the dog. If you keep the crate, the net cost is \$80. But we give you an extra option. When you're done with it, you can return the crate to FoG and receive \$50 back! (Net cost: \$30)

Either way, we deliver and setup!

\* Purchase a crate from a store. We'll help with set-up when we deliver. (Net cost: approx. \$100 to \$150)

\* Buy an airport kennel and keep it for traveling. (Net cost: \$80)

All of these options are subject to availability and all prices are approximate.

*If your dog will eventually be weaned away from the crate and out into your home, the metal crate has the advantage of allowing the dog to see what's going on in the household so acclimation comes more quickly.*

*Friends of Greyhounds (FoG) usually has folding crates available for sale. We also offer a program to return crates for re-use. Here's how it works: When you adopt, we will bring you a crate with the dog and set it up in your home. The cost of the crate is \$80. When the dog has successfully transitioned into the home, you have the option of returning the crate in good condition and we will refund you \$50 of the cost. Then we can use that same crate to help other dogs make the transition as well as raise a little money for FoG. Plus, we deliver the crate with the dog and show you how to set it up.*

*Several companies sell synthetic "lamb's wool" crate mats but an old blanket or comforter works just as well. Keep in mind these dogs are not yet used to household conditions and may play too rough with their first toys and blankets. Don't spend a lot of money on the initial purchases. When using the crate, try to put the blanket over the metal threshold so that the dog's toes and feet are protected when they go in and out. (More about Crating in Chapter 4)*

**2. Food.** We recommend a premium dry dog food, such as Science Diet, Iams, Nutro, Eukanuba or Pro Plan. Try buying a small (5 lb. or 10 lb.) bag first to make sure it agrees with your Greyhound. If you want to add some canned food, try Science Diet, Pedigree, Pro Plan or Authority. Avoid food with soy in it, as it is not highly digestible and can produce loose stools. (More about Feeding in Chapter 2)

**3. Bed.** Greyhounds need a well-padded bed because let's face it – they're bony! PetSmart, Petco, JB Wholesale, Target and Walmart have nice selections of dog beds with removable, washable covers. 34"x 44" or larger is the right size in a rectangular bed, while a 50" or larger diameter is the right size in a round bed. But buying a commercially made bed is not really necessary. You can easily save this for a Holiday present if you like. An old, thick comforter on the floor works just fine and if you want to put a big slab of thick foam rubber under it, that's even better. Foam rubber is often available rather inexpensively at fabric and upholstery supply shops such as Cloth World. You may find the dog wants to claim a spot in several different rooms of the house and you will probably want to provide a comforter in each of these dens.

**Collar & Lead:**

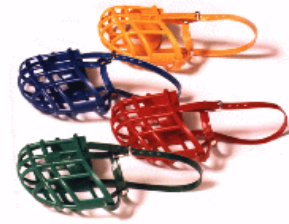
You will not need to purchase a collar and lead right away. A new martingale collar and a lead are included in your adoption fee. There is more information further along in this chapter about appropriate collars for when you are ready for a new one.

**Toy Shopping:**

The big pet stores that let you take your dog shopping with you are great. Let him pick out his own toys!

**REMEMBER:** Make a pit stop in the parking lot before entering the store!

**4. Muzzle.** A plastic kennel muzzle is an excellent safety device for introducing your new Greyhound to the family cat or a dog you already have. These are Greyhound-specific muzzles that allow the dog to do everything but bite or eat. FoG has used muzzles we will provide upon request or you may purchase new ones from KV Vet Supply (item #95040; \$7.79) or the National Greyhound Association (785-263-4660). A “medium” will fit all but the largest males.



**5. Food bowls.** Stainless steel food bowls are easy to clean and will last a lifetime.

We suggest that you purchase 2 or 3 quart bowls for food and water. A 1 cup measuring cup or scoop is also a good idea to help you know how much you’re feeding. (Also see information on stands for food bowls in Chapter 2)

**6. Stain Remover.** Although we hope your new Greyhound won’t have any accidents in your home, the reality is that they do happen, and it is best to “be prepared.” One of the best stain removers for pet accidents is Nature’s Miracle, which is available at most pet supply stores and from the catalog companies. Follow the directions on the container, and you’ll be surprised at how even the most stubborn stains and odors can be eliminated. Urine-Off, Woolite Pet Stain Remover and Resolve are also very effective products.

**7. Toys.** Some people may not consider these a necessity but most greyhound owners do. We suggest you buy one or two items including at least one “stuffie” (stuffed animal or cuddly type) and one chewable toy or rawhide to have at the house upon arrival and then add to the collection after everyone settles in a bit.

**8. Reference Book.** You should have a comprehensive source of information readily available. We are very proud of this “owner’s manual” but it may not answer all of your questions and it is not written by an authority in Greyhounds. Although we would love for you to call us with questions, a reference book may be more practical for the little things and to give you ideas. Friends of Greyhounds highly recommends that you purchase a copy of “**Retired Racing Greyhounds for Dummies**” by Lee Livingood. Even if you have had a greyhound before, this is a great book full of answers and ideas. It is usually available through the regular bookstores (Barnes & Nobles, B. Dalton, BooksAMillion, Book Stop, etc.) or internet shops

(Amazon.com). We have found most of the other greyhound books out there to be a waste of money, spending more time on track politics than on practical advice!

## **B. Supplemental Purchases - when you are ready:**

**Identification tag.** Buy a personal identification tag, with at least your name and telephone number on it. Have your Greyhound wear it on his collar at all times.

***Please** keep an id tag on your dog's collar at all times and keep the collar on your dog even in the house. That's the only "handle" these dogs come with and it could save your dog.*

**More Toys.** Fleece chew men, large squeaky toys, tied rope bones, are all popular with Greyhounds. You may want to take your dog shopping with you to the pet store and see what interests them - besides the other dogs! Avoid vinyl, plastic, and nylon chewies, such as booda bones or nylabones. The plastic or nylon fragments are indigestible and can injure your dog's intestines. Kong, a hard rubber, sort of round, toy is virtually indestructible, and is a great way to relieve boredom and satisfy the desire to chew. Smear peanut butter inside the hole and it will occupy your dog for hours. The "original Kong" is the right size (about 5" high) for Greyhounds, and is widely available. The red ones are generally better for Greyhounds than the black ones. Kongs can be washed in the top rack of the dishwasher, too.

Most of the dogs just retired from racing, have not had time to learn to play. If you have another dog in the house, the first dog may teach the new dog to play. Some of the greyhounds will take to playing with toys instinctively and others will never learn. Teaching a greyhound to find pleasure with a squeaky toy or to cuddle with a stuffed bunny can be one of your most satisfying experiences.

**Chewies.** The right "chewie" is a good way to help your Greyhound maintain dental health. One of the best is a beef knucklebone, usually available from a butcher shop or the meat department of most grocery stores. Greenies do a grey teeth cleaning job!

**Shedding.**  
*Your first 2 or 3 weeks together will be the worst for shedding. After that, their nervousness should be over and the shedding should virtually stop.*

Our dogs like rawhides but you need to be aware of what you are buying. Make sure they are American beefhide, 8" – 10" or larger, and processed without lime, bleach or arsenic, all of which can make your dog very sick. They come in neat new flavors now that dogs just love. Avoid the style with the tight knots on the end. Dogs tend to chew the bone in half and then work on the knots individually. Once chewed down some, they can easily become lodged in the throat. If you have two or more dogs, give chewies in different parts of the room to avoid arguments.

### **Frisbees:**

Until your dog learns about other toys, don't bother buying Frisbees. We've watched all of our dogs either sit and watch the Frisbee go by or run after it and then sniff it. Unless you know how to convince them to pick it up in their mouth or try to grab it from the air (who, me?) don't bother in the early stages.



## Moving a Greyhound

### Surprise!

Greyhounds don't always go where you want them too. When a greyhound won't be easily lead, don't keep pulling on his neck. They'll just put the brakes on harder and you'll strain yourself and the relationship. Get behind the dog and push. My preferred method is to stand squarely behind the rump (knees to butt) and simply bend your knees. This creates a gentle, but firm and equal pressure on both haunches and propels the dog forward. Once the stubborn streak is broken, they'll usually keep going for a while.



**Dog biscuits.** A biscuit (or two) a day is an excellent way to reduce tartar on your Greyhound's teeth. Again, read the ingredients and try to watch the soy. You may buy Purina One, Iams, other premium quality biscuits. But, frankly, our dogs' favorites are Ol' Roy brand from Walmart - especially the Peanut Butter flavored ones! Yummmm!

**Pooper scooper or plastic bags.** To pick up after your Greyhound in the back yard and on walks. You can get cute holders that hang on the leash or use plastic grocery bags. They fold up into your back pocket, and best of all, there is a free, never-ending supply of them from the grocery store. Just watch that the grocery bags don't have a hole in the bottom!

**Nail care.** If you choose to use nail clippers, buy the heavy-duty size. These usually have plastic covered orange or black handles. The new school of thought on nail care is to use a Dremel tool with a fine sanding barrel. These now come in fairly slow speeds (5,000 to 7,000 rpm) which are recommended and battery operated so there's no cords to snag. But people report just as great a success with the regular, household Dremels with run at up to 20,000 rpm and have cords on them. It may take some getting used to but the results are worth it!

**Grooming tools.** Hound grooming glove, curry brush or shedding blade. These will pull out your dog's dead hair and reduce shedding. Plus, most Greyhounds love the grooming experience, and it's a great way for human and hound to bond. The grooming glove, also sold as the Love Glove, is sometimes available in the dollar stores and is great for baths, too. Avoid Zoom Groom and rubber curry brushes as they tend to "burn" sensitive greyhound skin.

**Ear cleaner.** Cotton balls moistened with a mild solution of vinegar and water are a great, non-drying ear cleaner. If your dog swims a lot (not likely in a greyhound) and needs a drying solution, use alcohol instead of the vinegar and water. The stores also sell all kinds of ear-wipe products that are very handy. Q-tips can be used but be very careful.

**Flea and tick products. IMPORTANT!** Greyhounds are extremely sensitive to the chemicals used in flea and tick collars. Please **do not use a flea and tick collar on a greyhound**. Most of the products on the market are highly toxic to Greyhounds and should never be used. We only recommend topical flea/tick products, such as Frontline, Advantage, or Revolution (which also contains a heartworm treatment). Please consult your vet about these products. Your greyhound from Friends of Greyhounds will have received a treatment with one of these products and you will be told the date of the last treatment. These products need to be faithfully applied once a month for best results.

**Worming:** It is not unusual for dogs from the track to have some very stubborn cases of worms. Although your dog will have been wormed at FoG at least once and probably twice, that may not have been enough. On your first vet visit, be sure to have the vet check for worms and treat your grey if needed. Really stubborn worm conditions may need a product called Droncit which your vet will have. Never buy over the counter worming medications. Always consult your vet if you think your dog has worms.

**Collars.** Martingale collars are great for greyhounds. They are so perfect for the breed that many supply houses call them “greyhound collars.” A greyhound’s head is smaller than the neck and a regular collar will pull right off. But their skin is thin so a regular choke collar will do harm. A Martingale collar is a safe version of a choke collar. When you get your dog from FoG, we will supply you with a martingale collar and a leash. After you’ve settled in, you may want to get a fancier collar or just replace the old one. To see if your dog’s collar fits properly, pull up on the loop (where the leash hooks on) until the metal rings touch. That’s as tight as that collar can go if the leash is pulled. Your dog should not be choking and you should just be able to squeeze a finger underneath the collar. Keep a check on the fit of your dog’s collar. A few pounds could make a difference. There are also break away martingale collars on the internet. I haven’t had any experience with them but the website advertising is very persuasive. The cost is prohibitive to our non-profit operation and our dogs are under pretty close supervision. But if you want to know more about them, check the internet.

**Sweaters & Jackets.** Greyhounds have thin skin and get cold easily. If you’ll be out for a while and you need a jacket outside, maybe he does, too. Watch for styles that cover the chest without being restrictive and are cut high enough not to get wet when you pass by an inviting tree.

## C. Post-operative Care

In most cases, FoG-dogs will have been spayed or neutered well before they are offered for adoption. However, if your new pet’s surgery was within the last two weeks, there are a few things you should know.

- Check the incision site every day or two. If it is red and/or inflamed, call us or your vet.
- Plan on a vet visit for suture removal if the sutures are not dissolvable. We will have given you instructions about this. Generally, the males receive dissolvable sutures (unless there has been some additional surgery) but the females may need their sutures removed by a vet about 14 days after surgery.
- Please avoid rough play, high jumps, running and visits to the dog park for the first two weeks following surgery. Leash walk for at least the first week.
- Don't give your dog a bath for 14 days after surgery.

- Don't let your dog lick or chew the incision site. If this happens, put the muzzle on the dog and tape the bottom half. You can also put men's underwear on the dog, with the dog's tail coming out of the fly opening. Keep the shorts on the dog while in the house. Remember to remove them before the dog goes out, or they will get wet (and the neighbors will laugh!).
- Do call FoG or your assigned FoG Godmother volunteer with any questions.

### **SUMMARY - THE INITIAL, CRITICAL THINGS:**

1. Buy FOOD, TOYS, COOKIES and an ID Tag.
2. Decide about CRATES.
3. Make initial Appointment with Vet for Heartworm Meds and initial Checkup.
4. Check in with your Godparent.

## CHAPTER 2 - FEEDING YOUR GREYHOUND

### A. What and When

Dog cookies too boring? Try a big marshmallow or a vanilla wafer cookie or some cheesy goldfish crackers!

Greyhounds are natural athletes. They should **always** be kept lean. Their bone structure is not designed to carry large amounts of extra weight. You should always be able to see the tips of the dog's backbone. If you run your hand along the dog's side, you should feel the ribs. The last one or two ribs should be visible. Your dog's underbelly should tuck up behind the rib cage and in front of the hip (this is known as having a distinct "waistline"). Another rule of thumb is that your Greyhound's weight should not be more than 5 pounds over his racing weight. A Greyhound should never look like a Labrador! If your Greyhound gets "rotund," cut back on his food intake.

We recommend you feed premium-quality dry dog food, such as Science Diet, Iams, Nutro, Eukanuba, Pro Plan, Purina One, or Authority. If you want to mix in some canned food for taste, buy only premium brands, such as Science Diet, Pedigree, Pro Plan, or Authority. Try to avoid foods with soy, as they are not highly digestible, and can cause loose stools. Never get those "burger" types of dog food. You are buying fat, preservatives, and empty calories.

Feed your greyhound twice a day unless your vet advises you otherwise. Most owners feed half the daily amount in the morning and half in the evening. Your dog will adjust to your schedule pretty quickly. At the track when they were racing, they were generally fed once a day about 2 ½ pounds of food - dry food mixed with low-grade meat plus vegetables or Karo syrup or whatever that kennel owner believed in. It is better **not** to feed him just once a day. That can be too much food for his stomach and can cause bloat.

Try to develop a feeding routine whereby you feed at about the same time each day. We strongly recommend against "free feeding" or always keeping the food bowl full. Greyhounds can be real "chow hounds," and free feeding is a sure way to make them fat.

At Friends of Greyhounds, twice a day (generally 5:30 AM & 5:30 PM) we feed about 2 cups of dry food, moistened with some water and mixed with one or more of canned dog food, yogurt, turkey franks, vegetables, rice, sweet potatoes, or whatever else. Your dog is probably at about his correct weight when you get him so you'll want to feed a bit less than we do. We have the pleasure of putting weight on these sweeties. You get to be the authority figure!

You will have to do a little adjusting to find the optimum amount of food to feed your Greyhound. Normally you would start at about 4 cups a day, divided into two meals. If your dog is always ravenous or seems thin, you can gradually increase the amount. If your dog leaves some in his bowl, is getting plump, or needs to be encouraged to finish eating, cut back. A 1/4 cup up or down will make a difference.

Always moisten the food with a bit of warm water. Greyhounds do not produce as much saliva as other dogs, and require the water for proper digestion. Also, make fresh water is available at all times but do not let your pet drink excessively after eating. Drinking too much water too quickly can cause bloat. Also, what goes in must come out...

Avoid strenuous exercise, such as hard running, for about 1 hour before and 2 hours after a meal. Hard exercise can cause bloat. If your dog gets bloat, you have about 30 minutes to get the dog to the vet. See Chapter 8, Veterinary Care, for a discussion of bloat.

Watch your dog's waistline. If he is losing weight in the winter, increase his portions a bit when the weather gets cold. Even in Florida, greyhounds feel the cold weather. Greyhounds have a high body heat and some burn more "fuel" to maintain this than when it was warm. This usually indicates that your dog needs a sweater or jacket when going out, too. Cut back again when the weather warms up.

Some special problems may be helped by varying the feeding schedule. For instance, If you feed your dog in the morning and promptly go off to work for the day, you may come home to "accidents" in the house. In that case, you might want to give the dog 30% of his food in the morning and 70% after work when you'll be around for walks in the evening. Or, if 4 AM has become your dog's preferred walking time and it's not yours, try feeding a bit earlier in the evening and picking up the water bowl around 8 or 9 PM.

We urge you NOT to feed your dog from the dinner table. You are teaching your dog bad manners and feeding him food he does not need. Don't do it. (See also Counter Surfing, Chapter 3)

## **B. Additions.**

Most Greyhounds like variety. Although you should find a healthy dry dog food and stick with it, you can vary the additions to make it more interesting for both of you. If you use a large quantity, such as 1/2 a can of canned food and the yogurt, you should cut the amount of dry food proportionally. Besides the water you are going to add to the dry food, here are a few suggestions:

*Canned Food* - Choose a good quality canned food and add about 1/3 to 1/2 of a regular (#10) sized can to the dry dog food. I try to mix in canned food for about half of the dog's meals. It's good for them and makes the other goodies more special.

Some Greyhound owners cook for their dogs. That's pampering them, not *spoiling* them! You might try cooking up 5-6 cups of rice; a pound of chicken livers or drained ground beef, and adding 2-3 cups of cooked vegetables (canned or fresh). Mix it all together and add it to their dinner, about 3/4-cup at a meal and decrease the dog food by that amount.

All these fun and fancy foods are fine once your dog is settled in. For the first couple days, we recommend you keep the food consistent and simple. Most hounds have sensitive stomachs and more sensitive psyche. They'll be concerned and upset at the drastic changes. Every day will be a new adventure. Until everyone settles in, don't go experimenting too much with the food.

*Table scraps* - Some authorities discourage table scraps but if you are eat a healthy diet of vegetables & protein, those leftovers are healthy for your hound, too. Some pasta and starch is okay but if you live on mashed potatoes and spaghetti or highly spiced dishes, skip the table scraps. And remember - no onions! (See Chapter 7)

*Vegetables* - Greyhounds love their veggies! They've been raised with carrots or spinach added occasionally to their food and we do the same at the FoG kennel. Some of them love raw baby carrots! So if you're having veggies with dinner, feel free to share.

*Yogurt* - A big dollop (a full serving tablespoon) of yogurt added to each meal will help your hound avoid that ... ahem ... gas problem that seems to be so prevalent among greyhounds. We buy a big container of a plain or vanilla yogurt, regular or low-fat, and just use it for the dog's food. It makes a nice creamy sauce or you can leave it on top like whipped topping. The dogs love it and it works just great. If gas becomes a really bad problem and the yogurt isn't working, they say to try Breath-eze chewable breath mints. They contain enzymes that help with "digestive odors" as well as that other social problem, bad breath. We've had such good luck with the yogurt that we haven't tried the Breath-eze. And nothing will dissuade a prospective adopter like greyhound gas! You can also check the fat content of your dog's food. A fatty diet can cause both flatulence and bad breath. You might try a brand of dog food with a lower percentage of fat.

*Sweet Potato* - I buy them fresh when they are cheap and just scrub them and microwave or bake them. Chunk it up (skin and all) and add about 1/2 a medium potato to the dry food mixed with water. This is also good treatment for diarrhea but more on that later.

*Rice* - we like to add some beef bouillon or leftover chicken stock to the water while it cooks for interest. A couple tablespoons added to the dry food and a dollop of yogurt makes a good mix.

*Mackerel, Tuna or Sardines* - Greyhounds must be half cat when it comes to fish. The stinkier the better! We mix in canned mackerel when we can afford it but tuna or sardines makes any occasion special! Try a sardine mix-in for your dog's "Gotcha Day" party!

*Hot Dogs* - Of course they'd like the ones you are eating best but we buy the no sugar added Turkey franks and the dogs and our budget both love them. They're relatively good nutrition, too.

*Pumpkin* - you can buy cans of it fairly cheaply or roast some of what the kids scrape out of that Jack-o-lantern. Don't buy the pumpkin pie filling with the sugar and syrup in it. Just the canned pumpkin. Yum!

**Nutritional Additives.** There are several nutritional additives you might want to add to your Greyhound's meals.

*Garlic* helps fend off fleas and aids digestion.

*Prozyme* helps the coat grow in quickly and aids in digestion.

*Lipiderm* is an Omega-3 fatty acid supplement, which cuts down on dry, flaky skin and dull, shedding coats. Derm-Caps is an equivalent product. Any of these will condition your dog's coat.

*Vitamin E* - adding a 400 IU capsule of to your dog's daily rations will help her immune system to fight off disease-causing bacteria.

*Glucosamine* - Your ex-racer may be prone to arthritis and similar problems as he gets older. Many greyhound owners get Glucosamine or Glucosamine with Chondroitin for their dogs. Check out [www.greyhoundgang.org](http://www.greyhoundgang.org) for a great website on this subject.

## C. Bowls, Stands and Bundt Pans!

There are arguments on both sides about raised bowls. One school of thought says that raising the dogs bowls so that they are not straining their neck or gulp air when they eat will help avoid bloat. Another swears that the statistics say that the bowl on the floor works better. In the racing kennels they put the bowls on the floor of the crate. At FoG, we have the water in raised buckets that hang on the chain link kennel walls but at this time, we don't have raised food bowls (because we can't afford them).

If your dog really inhales his food, use a Jello mold or bundt pan for its dish. The center hole forces the dog to eat more slowly.

I think the raised bowls just have to be better but that's my personal opinion. Watch your dog eat. Some of them lie down to eat and in that case, I guess the bowl on the floor is better. If he stands up and you see that splay-legged, giraffe pose, he probably could use a raised bowl. It can't be comfortable to eat like that and chances are he's gulping more air than he should. Most books recommend raising the bowls to 12 to 16 inches off the floor. I've seen them higher for larger dogs, too. If you decide to use a stand, you have a lot of choices. Go ahead and invest in a sturdy one because it's going to be used twice a day for a long time. Many of the cheap ones (and they really aren't 'cheap') will rust or warp. Some of the sturdier plastic ones are nice but may take up a lot of room. Storage inside is an option but remember that you may come home to a dog who pulled out the bowl and helped himself!

We have some pretty crafty adopters out there and they've often made their own raised bowls. One took a small occasional table and cut the legs down and cut out holes for the stainless steel bowls to drop into. Works great! Another built a sturdy stand with 2x4 legs and 1/4 inch sheet

plywood braces and top. A good sealer keeps it from warping from the splash over. Or try a 5 gallon bucket turned upside down. Cut a hole for the bowl to sit in so it doesn't slide around. It's very sturdy and the price is right.

By far the best one I've seen may not be right for everyone. One of our volunteers was having a new, composition counter top put in. The carpenter offered to take the piece they cut out for the triple sink to make her a cutting board. Instead she had him cut three holes in it to fit her two dogs water bowl and food dishes. This was affixed to the wall with angle brackets to brace and secure it. Another piece of white (to match the wall) counter material was secured behind it as a splashboard. This great set up lets her easily clean underneath. Of course, it's not movable but it works great for her. I think the engraved name plates above the food bowls are just the crowning touch!

## **BIG BAD FOUR**

**NEVER, NEVER**  
**allow your greyhound to eat:**

**Chocolate**  
**Onions**  
**Grapes**  
**Raisins**



## **CHAPTER 3 - LIFE IN THE HOUSE**

### **A. Introduction to the House**

Racing Greyhounds have no exposure to life in a home prior to their adoption. When your FoG volunteer does the first house visit, we'll try to point out potential problems and review with you how to handle them. Generally, we'll have either already visited or will deliver the dog and be doing the introductory walk with you.

When your dog first arrives at your home, after meeting the other dogs, cats, kids, etc. take a little break and then give him a guided tour of his new home. With the leash on, walk him around and talk to him like you're showing a good friend your home. Show him where his food is, where he'll sleep and where you sleep. Gently introduce him to sliding glass doors and mirrors. Show him he can't get through those. Show him the swimming pool and let him see that it's full of water and he can go through that!

### **B. Other Cats and Dogs**

We have tried to test your Greyhound's interest in cats prior to adoption. Often, before adoption, we will ask you to bring your other pets to the kennel and "try out" some of our potential adoptees. We'll let your animals and the greyhound meet in a relatively neutral, controlled environment and it will give you (and us!) an idea of that dog's compatibility with your cat, dog or even kids.

However, Greyhounds are animals, not machines, and therefore not totally predictable. We ask that you follow these directions when introducing your new dog to your current pets. Whether you are introducing your Greyhound to cats or dogs, your Grey should be leashed and wearing his muzzle, just in case.

Introduce your Greyhound to the other dog(s) on neutral territory. With leashes on, have them meet on the sidewalk or down the block from your home. Let them greet each other and sniff each other over. Then take them for a walk together. When you arrive back home, walk them around your property (leashes still on). Then bring them into the house together.

You can expect things to be a bit unsettled between your Greyhound and your other dog(s) for a few weeks. They are figuring out who will be the dominant dog. All dogs need to have a secure place in the pack order. When you introduce a new dog to a formerly single dog, or into an existing pack, they have to work out who will be alpha, or boss. There may be snarling and barking from time to time. Unless it gets serious, let them work it out. They will settle down once the pack order is clear to them. You have no control over who is alpha and who is not. This is a "dog thing." Let them do it.

If this is your cat's first experience with a dog in the house, you might want to take it VERY slowly for the first day or two, or you could have an enraged cat. Some cats are extremely threatened by a dog in the house, and need time to get used to the idea. If your cat is used to living with dogs, you needn't be so concerned. Crate training will help give you peace of mind in that first week when you have to leave the cat and dog alone in the house.

When you first introduce your cat to your Greyhound indoors, make sure the Grey is muzzled and leashed. Hold the leash in your hand. Leave the cat on the floor. Look for the following signs in the Greyhound: teeth clicking or snapping, or alert ears. This by itself could just indicate curiosity, as this is the first time your Greyhound has seen your particular cat. It is only a concern if it is accompanied by some of these other warning signs: fixed gaze or stare, (which cannot be broken even when you run your hand in front of the Greyhound's eyes), trembling, lurching, or drooling.

It is natural for your Greyhound to be curious about your cat. But intense curiosity combined with any of the above signs can indicate that your Greyhound is one of the few whose prey drive is so strong that he cannot live safely with small animals. If you suspect this to be true, call FoG at once. You may need to exchange your Greyhound for another one.

In the vast majority of cases, the Greyhound will get along just fine with the cat or small dogs. To be on the safe side, though, you should always keep the dog and other small animals separated when you are not at home or cannot supervise their interaction. Watch them carefully when they are interacting. If the Greyhound acts aggressive toward a small animal in any way, tell the dog "NO!" and separate them immediately.

Never let your Greyhound chase any of your small animals, even in play. Play behavior can turn into hunting behavior in a flash. No cat or small dog is fast enough to escape a determined Greyhound. Never let your cat outside with your Greyhound in a fenced yard. They may get along fine inside, but outside, all bets are off. If the cat bolts, the Greyhound might chase it, catch it, and injure it.

Feed your cats and dogs in separate areas. You can feed your Greyhound in her crate, or in a quiet area near the kitchen. Greyhounds often have an interest in scarfing cat food, so you might want to feed your cats elsewhere. You can teach the Greyhound to leave the cat food alone, but she won't do it unless you teach her.

If you have any questions or are unsure if you are reading the warning signs correctly, please call FoG immediately. We will be happy to discuss this with you.

## C. Greyhounds and Children

Friends of Greyhounds, like most greyhound adoption groups, will not generally place a retired racing greyhound in a home with a child under six years old. Of course, each family, child, dog and situation will be evaluated separately.

Don't get us wrong. Most greyhounds LOVE children! But when your Greyhound arrives from the track and enters "civilian" life, he has probably never been around children before. He has no reason to dislike them, as he has had no experience with them. The move from the professional racing kennel, through our adoption kennel, and into a private home is a stressful time and can be a difficult adjustment. Absolutely everything this dog has ever known has changed. Each dog is a different personality and will adjust differently and handle the changes differently. But every adopted Greyhound needs time to adjust to this new life. Please bear this in mind when bringing a new dog into a household with children of any age, even if they are just occasional visitors.

At the FoG kennel and in our foster homes, we have tried to expose the dogs to cats and kids and other dogs. But these brief exposures are not a truly fair test of how *your* greyhound will react with *your* kids.

The real question to ask is not whether Greyhounds like children, but whether your child or children know how to behave around animals. Any animal has its limits if a child pesters or mistreats it. Dog bites are not breed specific!! It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to make sure the children respect the dog and leave it in peace. Parents whose children are too young, too immature or who lack discipline and cannot be taught to treat an animal with respect and kindness should wait until the children are ready before they bring a pet into the home. It is better to think this through now, rather than put a dog through the heartbreak of bonding with you and then being surrendered because of a child's inability to treat the dog properly.

*Childproofing Your Dog* by Brian Kilcommons is highly recommended by many Greyhound adoption groups nationwide. It is available for purchase from local bookstores, Amazon.com and other online booksellers.

The following are some household rules to ensure a peaceful, happy relationship between the new Greyhound and children.

The first and most important rule is **let sleeping dogs lie**. The phenomenon behind this rule is called Sleep Aggression. It is something many newly retired Greyhounds exhibit and **it will go away with time**. Your Greyhound has spent all his life sleeping in the secure confines of a crate. He has

never been surprised in his sleep before. Add that to the general level of stress the new dog is experiencing, and you have something called a startle reaction, or sleep aggression. A dog having a startle reaction will leap suddenly to his feet from a sound sleep, barking, growling, and legs flying every which way. The dog is startled and scared. If someone (your child, for instance) is leaning over the dog when it happens, they could get scratched or bitten.

Startle reactions have been mistaken by many families as evidence of meanness, and many well-meaning and confused dogs have been returned because of this. A startle reaction **DOES NOT** indicate that the Greyhound is dangerous or mean.

**BUT.** . . it is also something you should not allow. If your dog does show a startle reaction, do what trainers call a “shakedown.” Grab the dog by the collar with both hands. With you standing over her and staring **down** at her, shake the collar hard while pulling upwards on it, and say “No!!” in a very firm voice. (NOTE: This is a serious form of discipline, and should never be used casually or for minor behavioral mistakes). Be very decisive with the Greyhound, but do not hit her. After a shakedown, both you and your dog will be a little traumatized. Leave your dog alone for half an hour, and then make up with her. And do NOT give up on your dog! Bear with her as she struggles to adjust.

The best way to avoid a startle reaction is to avoid the dog when he's sleeping. Greyhounds sometimes sleep with their eyes open. Speak your Greyhound's name if you want him. Make him get up and come to you. Don't lean over him and touch him while he's lying down. Make sure your children observe this rule.

All dogs are entitled to privacy and quiet when they are eating and sleeping. Children must be told not to bother the dog during these private times. It is YOUR responsibility to consistently enforce this. Do not let your child take away the dog's food or interfere with its mealtime in any way. It is best to feed your Greyhound in his crate at first to enforce this.

Children should be told never to hang on the Greyhound's neck or climb on his back. The dog could feel threatened or be injured. They should never pull the dog's ears or tail, or rub their hands going against the grain of the fur. They should never, ever pester the dog if he is lying on his bed, or poke anything into the crate or try to pull the bed out from under the dog. No animal, or human for that matter, can tolerate that kind of invasion of personal space for long.

We strongly recommend that you *not* allow your Greyhound on the furniture if you have children. Allowing the Greyhound on the furniture puts him at face level with children, which may make him think that he is at the same level in the pack (your family) as the child. This can also be a recipe for

disaster if the Greyhound has a startle reaction when a child approaches him on the couch while he is resting.

It is also *your* responsibility to make absolutely certain that you never, ever leave your new Greyhound and your young child alone, unsupervised, even for a second. Until you really know your new Greyhound, you cannot be sure what he will do when confronted with a young child who may not know the right way to behave around him. This is true of any new dog, not just a Greyhound. If you need to leave the room, crate your dog. It is better to be safe than sorry.

Make sure you have hold of your dog by the collar before any door is opened to let your children or their friends in or out of the house. Teach everyone in your family to be extremely cautious about leaving gates and doors open (this goes for car doors, also). Greyhounds move so quickly they will be out the door and down the street in the blink of an eye. Teach your kids and their friends about the importance of keeping gates and doors closed at all times.

Finally, do not let your children crawl into the Greyhound's crate. Privacy is important to a Greyhound adjusting to life away from the track. Initially, we recommend that you utilize the crate when your children are actively playing. It is also a good idea to use the crate when your children have friends over to play. This way your new pet has a chance to experience and get used to children while in the safety and security of his crate.

## D. Training and Obedience

Greyhounds are special, wonderful dogs, but the operative word here is DOGS. They need and understand pack structure, just like any other dog. Do you understand the importance of pack structure? This is another area in which adoptive families have misunderstood canine behavior, resulting in failed adoptions. Please make sure this doesn't happen to you.

Greyhounds may not look much like wolves, but like all other dog breeds, they are genetically programmed to form packs according to the same rules that wolves follow. As in wolf packs, a dog's social unit must have an alpha, or leader. When the dog's social unit is a human family, the leader absolutely **must** be a person, namely you. Being alpha involves more than sheer power. It is a position of responsibility. The dog looks to you for food, protection, companionship, and most importantly, rules. When you are in control, your Greyhound respects you and feels secure in knowing what the boundaries are. Please note that being in control is not the same as being mean. You must enforce the rules with kindness and firmness, not cruelty!

All human family members must be of higher rank in the pack than the dogs. This is important because dogs, like wolves, will challenge the rank order in the pack if they perceive any weakness in those members of higher

**Training:** There are actually retired racing Greyhounds who have won obedience titles. (Okay, we never actually met one - but *we hear* they're out there!)

rank. Challenging pack order translates as extremely undesirable behavior incompatible with family life: growling, snarling, biting, threatening to attack the owners, or refusal to obey commands. Challenges to your authority as alpha usually begin with something small, such as growling when you come too close to the dog's food bowl while he's eating. The owner must ALWAYS win these challenges. If the dog gets away with it, it's a green light for the next step in a dominance challenge. Pretty soon, you will have an out-of-control dog on your hands.

You don't want your dog to display these behaviors toward you or your children. The best way to prevent these behaviors is to assert your rightful place as alpha. Between themselves, two or more dogs will decide who is the alpha canine. That is their issue to work out, not yours. There is no way for you to influence that ranking so you will have to keep an eye out for aggressive behaviors but otherwise, let them work it out. Your issue is to be certain that you are alpha over all of them.

Sometimes adopters are reluctant to discipline their new Greyhound because they believe that he was abused in his racing kennel or lived a hard life and should now be allowed "the good life" with few restrictions. While racing Greyhounds are not kept as pampered pets the way we keep our Greyhounds at home, they are cared for as working dogs with clear rules about what they can and cannot do. Their daily routine and the rules they live by are sources of certainty and security for them. Continuing – and enforcing - that structure of "rules to live by" for them is an act of kindness by you, not meanness or cruelty.

Reprimands should be done in a low-pitched voice. The reprimand should be a short: "NO!" This is sufficient to train a Greyhound. Hitting a Greyhound is unnecessary and counter-productive. It frightens them, teaches them nothing, and causes them to become timid or aggressive.

Now is the time to lay down the ground rules for your Greyhound. If you don't want the dog on your furniture, establish that rule at the very beginning. If you want your Greyhound to stay off the furniture or out of certain rooms, teach that to him right away. Make sure you are gentle and firm about enforcing household rules, but enforce them you must, or your Greyhound will think he is alpha over you and that is a recipe for disaster.

The most effective way to train your Greyhound is to join a basic obedience class. These are not terribly expensive. They can be a lot of fun and a great way to bond with your new pet. Our local PetSmart offers them reasonably as do many pet stores and a few boarding/grooming shops. You can also learn about classes at the dog parks and trainers often leave information with our office. Be sure to use your Greyhound's martingale collar. Just remember that training must be done with a light, encouraging hand, and leash rules always, always apply, even with a highly trained dog.

Greyhounds can be taught to sit, but they generally prefer not to sit. They are more likely to crouch, like a lion, or flop over on their sides. Their long backs and well-developed muscles make sitting awkward for them.

Greyhounds can be taught to come when called. But don't ever be fooled into thinking they will come every time you call them. A Greyhound in pursuit of prey will not respond to verbal commands. However, teaching your dog to recall on command could save his life if he ever got loose.

Greyhounds are extremely sensitive animals. They respond very well to praise. This should always be verbal, accompanied with patting and/or a treat. The verbal praise should be in a high-pitched, happy voice. Also, dogs can read facial expressions, so smile when your dog does well, and frown when he could have done better. It is perfectly possible to establish your position as alpha by utilizing praise!

## **E. Climbing Stairs**

One of the things they have not learned about is climbing stairs. If your dog doesn't automatically take to climbing stairs, you'll need to teach her.

With your dog on the leash, walk over to the steps and continue on up as if there was nothing to it. Sometimes they just follow blindly and you've got no problem at all. Act like it's perfectly natural. Some dogs will take the stairs in stride with you. Some won't. Start with the shortest available flights of stairs and work up to those steep, long flights if you can. If possible, approach from another room so you kind of have a walking rhythm going as you get closer. Be prepared for a sudden stop but don't communicate your concern to the dog. If the dog goes on up the steps PRAISE and cookies are in order. Coming down may be just as easy or may be a little more of a challenge.

Stair climbing is serious business to the Greyhound. Some of them are scared at first. Encourage your dog, but do not coddle her. Dogs can read our facial expressions, so remain calm, reassuring, and upbeat while teaching stair climbing. Don't scold your dog if she is having trouble learning. It may seem silly to you, but it's not to her! Every dog is different. Some dogs will easily handle a short set of stairs but balk at the high ones.

If the situation is such that you can wait for them to go up the steps, give the dog a couple days. For instance, if only the bedrooms are upstairs and the access to outside and the kitchen and family room are at ground level, going upstairs can be postponed a bit until the dog has gotten a little more oriented and has more courage. A few days may not matter. Sometimes just learning that something they really, really want - like access to mommy's bedroom - is at the top of the steps may be the final incentive they need.

If the dog absolutely has to get up those steps (your apartment is on the second floor) and has put on the brakes, start at the bottom of the staircase and try moving the dog's feet from one step to the next, one foot at a time. You may need to put your knee behind the dog's rear end and gently push up. As the dog's hind quarters start to elevate, you can move one hind foot up one more step. Encourage your Greyhound by saying "Come on, let's go!" or something like that. Proceed this way, gently and slowly by moving the front feet first and either letting the dog move the hind feet or by doing it for her. When you get to the top, praise your Greyhound in a happy voice and both of you relax for a few minutes. Have a cookie together!

When you start back down, stand in front of your dog and help her move her feet from step to step. Place your hand on her chest if it makes her feel more secure. Praise her again when you reach the bottom.

Greyhounds learn best on carpeted stairs. If your stairs are not carpeted, or are steep or open-backed, expect that the whole process will take longer. Be patient. When your Greyhound has really bonded with you, she will follow you anywhere, including up and down stairs. Most Greyhounds fly up and down stairs in a short period of time. There is no reason to consider moving your bedroom furniture to the first floor!

## **F. Swimming Pools**

Every dog has its own personality and greyhounds are no exception. Some of them love swimming and some do not. Most love lying around in a kid's wading pool on a warm day. (Of course, all of them like a couch in an air conditioned living room on a *hot* day.) If you have a swimming pool at your home or if you regularly visit with others who have pools, please, please put your dog in the pool. At least twice a year even if the dog absolutely hates the water, you need to get the dog out into the water and show him how to get to the steps to get out. If you don't and he accidentally falls in when you're not around, he could drown.

## **G. Counter Surfing and Other Mischief**

Greyhounds, particularly the females, can reach high places, such as your kitchen counters, with very little effort. Female greyhounds are

generally lighter than the males. Since most kennel owners have dogs living in upper and lower rows of crates, they put the females and small males into the upper ones. To make life simpler for getting dogs in and out for exercise, they teach the girls to jump in and out of the crates.



These are just about at counter or dining room table height. (You figure out what comes next!)

When Greyhounds stand up on their hind legs, they are eye-to-eye with an adult. Imagine the possibilities for mischief! It's like having a 5-ft. tall toddler in the house! Be sure to place breakables or potentially harmful items out of reach of your new dog (remembering that their reach is significant).

Do not feed your Greyhound at the dinner table. That long nose can slide right across the top of the table. If your dog thinks he might be fed at the table, it is not a big step for him to begin stealing food. When your Greyhound decides to investigate your counter tops or dinner table, that is a good time to use the "NO" word.

Yes, you can train him to give up this investigative behavior and your life will return to normal. Just remember that absolutely everything in a house is new to them, and they're curious! They have no idea what is OK for them to touch and what is not. You have to teach them.

If you are having problems with your new Greyhound and aren't following these guidelines, you need to go back to square one and carefully examine your actions. Most canine misbehavior is the result of human error or misunderstanding.

Greyhounds can be very clever at opening trash can lids and cabinet doors to get at what is inside: cat food, cereal, flour, or more dangerous items like chemicals and medicine. If your dog is a door opener, consider installing childproof latches. If possible, keep the trash behind a latched door.

Greyhounds are also known to be interior decorators. They will move pillows, stuffed animals, and other interesting objects from one place to another. They may even take your books off the shelves. They like to rearrange their own beds (we call this "nesting") and some greyhounds are pack-rats, hiding special items (like your slippers, collectable beany-babies or hair brush) in little niches or in their bedding. Every greyhound has his or her own, wonderful personality just waiting to be discovered.

## H. Summary - Behavior in the Home

We have discussed quite a few issues about training, housebreaking, and integrating your new pet into the family. We have given you a lot of "never do this, don't do that, always do this instead." You need to use common sense when deciding how to implement these guidelines. Very few rules apply universally to every situation.

Each dog and each adopting parent has a unique personality. The volunteers at Friends of Greyhounds do our best to help you find a compatible dog but **it is the adopter's responsibility to consciously decide which rules work in their situation and which ones don't.**

These are the few rules that are **absolute** in **every** single case:

- People should be alpha over the dog. The dog should never be alpha over the people.
- Greyhounds should always be treated gently, with kindness and respect.
- Leash rules always apply (this includes the other rules about the outdoors).

## I. Microchips and Tattoos

Once you and your dog have settled in and you've decided this is definitely the critter you want to spend your life with, please consider microchipping. The tattoos in a greyhound's ear are specific methods of identifying your dog but will seldom help the finder of the dog return him to you.

FoG will microchip any dog for \$30 which includes registration. If your dog was adopted from us, the cost drops to \$25.

Bring your neighbors - Chip those Dogs!

The best way to get your dog home is to implant a microchip and have it properly registered. Friends of Greyhounds feels so strongly that this is a critical part of caring for your dog, that we actually offer microchipping service at our adoption kennel or from our base in Sunrise. The process is no more difficult than a shot and most greyhounds are just fine with it. If there is a moment of pain, it's forgotten once a cookie is offered and it's certainly less than the pain of being lost forever and never finding your home again, perhaps to die in a shelter, unclaimed.

Every shelter and most vet's offices have readers that will detect the major chips and your dog can be returned quickly with a minimum of trauma. During recent hurricanes, over 600 dogs were picked up stray in one county in Florida. Some people say they don't need to chip because their dog never goes out of the fenced yard but when hurricanes come through there may be no fence, no yard, no walls. The dogs with chips were held for eventual return but the ones without chips had to be disbursed to counties all over the state as there was not nearly that much room at the pound. Many of these dogs never got back home.

## CHAPTER 4 - Housebreaking & Crate Training

### A. The Great Indoors

Greyhounds are crate-trained at the racetrack. They are used to being let outside to relieve themselves on a regular schedule.

Housebreaking is a relatively simple matter of convincing them that your house is just a large crate. Your dog may even have been housebroken in a foster home. In any case, you will need to be sure that your new dog understands your housebreaking rules.

Crate training is the most effective way to housebreak your Greyhound. Greyhounds are raised in crates and are very comfortable with them. The basic principle is that Greyhounds are very clean animals and will not eliminate where they sleep. Therefore, if a Greyhound is in the crate, it will not eliminate either in the crate or in the "big crate," the house.

Place the crate in a room where the dog feels included in family life. A remote location such as the basement or an unused room far away from family activity will make your dog feel as though he has been abandoned. Don't do that.

The first rule of housebreaking is: if you can't watch your dog closely, crate him. Be alert and don't let your dog out of your sight until you are confident that he is housebroken. The second rule of housebreaking is: DON'T punish for accidents. Don't use the crate for punishment. Never shout at the Greyhound, hit him, smack him with a newspaper, or rub his nose in the mess! These only frighten your already confused pet. A simple "NO!" in a low-pitched voice, followed by a quick trip outside, are all that is needed.

Dogs respond much better to positive reinforcement. When your dog does his duty outside, praise him warmly! Hugs, pats, and a "Good dog!" in a happy voice are in order. Dogs (like people) are more motivated by praise than by physical punishment.

Here are some more ideas to make housebreaking go smoothly.

- Keep your Greyhound on a consistent schedule for feeding, walking, and trips outside. Don't vary the schedule, even on weekends. Greyhounds are used to living on a schedule, and that makes training easier.
- At a minimum, your dog should be turned out first thing in the morning, first thing when you come home from work, 15-30 minutes after each meal, and last thing before bed. If your

workday is very long, you may want to look into the services of a dog-walker. Hiring a neighbor to walk the dog in the middle of your day may make your arrival home more pleasurable.

- Keep the dog's diet consistent and don't give too many between-meal treats. Watch your pet's stool. If it is too loose, cut back on the amount of food by 1/4 cup per feeding until it becomes firm. (Also see notes on Diarrhea, Chapter 8)

If you walk your Greyhound for turn-outs, walk in a small area where you want her to go to the bathroom. Dogs like to relieve themselves in familiar surroundings. Limit bathroom walks to 10-15 minutes so the dog can understand what you expect from her. After the dog does her business, PRAISE! Positive reinforcement is the best teacher.

If your Greyhound does not relieve herself, confine her to the crate for another 30 minutes, and then try another short bathroom walk. If she goes, PRAISE! If not, back to the crate for another 30 minutes, and so on. Eventually she'll go. PRAISE! When she finally does her duty.

After the dog does her business and has received her praise (and maybe a cookie?) you can let her off leash in a fenced yard to exercise and stretch out. Or you can take her on that longer walk if you want to. Just be sure she understands that the primary reason for being out there is to attend to business first. This way she will get in the habit of going first and playing afterwards and it may save your schedule one busy morning.

Once your pet does start eliminating outside you can give her some freedom in the house, but still keep an eye on her. Do not let your dog out of your sight until you are confident that your dog is completely housebroken. This should be several days, at least. If you cannot watch your dog, crate her.

If you catch your dog in the act of having an accident, say "NO!" or "STOP!" in a firm, low voice. Do not punish or frighten your dog. Clip on the leash and take her out immediately to the bathroom area. When your dog finishes, PRAISE! Clean the accident area with an effective stain/odor remover to remove the scent of urine or stool from the carpet or floor. If the floor is tile, pay particular attention to the grout line as it tends to hold scent. Commercial brands of animal stain and odor removers such as Nature's Miracle are available or you can try white vinegar, lemon juice concentrate, and warm water. Do not let your dog see you clean up the accident. (No, I don't know why but that's what the professional trainers say!)

When you have a new greyhound in the house, even if they've been housebroken with a foster family, follow this housebreaking routine. New adoptees tend to regress and although they will pick up quickly, this is a new, fresh environment for them and they need to learn *your* rules. Also, watch out for artificial potted plants and Christmas trees. They look really, really real to a greyhound!

If you are still having trouble, make sure the dog is not sick. Worms or urinary tract infections are easily cured, but can interfere with housebreaking. Your new greyhound was wormed at FoG but sometimes they pick things up when we're not looking!

Here is a sample schedule for a hypothetical family where everyone is out of the house during the day:

1. Upon rising, take the dog for a bathroom walk. PRAISE!! (if your dog doesn't go, bring him in, crate him, feed him, and then walk again within 10-15 minutes of eating.)
2. Feed and water, wait 10-30 minutes, and walk again. PRAISE!! If you can't watch the dog in the house during this time period (perhaps you are getting ready for work) crate him.
3. Walk your pet one last time just before leaving. PRAISE!!
4. Put your dog in his crate in a familiar room. Praise him. Leave a radio or the TV on to keep the dog company. You might leave a Kong or chew toy, too.
5. When you return from work (or any time you are out), take the dog out of the crate. If you discover your dog whining or barking in the crate, do not let him out. Be sure your dog is quiet before you let him out of the crate. Take the dog outside immediately. This will reinforce the housebreaking routine. PRAISE!!
6. After your dog is fed dinner, wait 10-30 minutes, and walk. PRAISE!! Once your dog relieves himself, you can go for your recreational walk. That's a big reward, as Greyhounds just love to go for walks!
7. Just before bed, take your Greyhound for a final bathroom walk. PRAISE! Initially you may want to withhold water for 3 hours before retiring and through the night. Confine your Greyhound in his crate in the bedroom with you. Once you know your dog is housebroken you can let him sleep on a dog bed in your bedroom, or in whatever room you want him to sleep in.

Even if you have a fenced yard for turn-outs, it's important to walk your new Greyhound for potty breaks the first week, so you can be there to PRAISE him when he does his business outside. After you establish that pattern for a week or so, you can begin to turn him out in your fenced yard for elimination.

Eventually your dog will be trustworthy in the house. You can adapt the above schedule to suit your own situation and needs. Some families keep using the crate, but many find their dog refuses to go in it after he feels thoroughly "at home" in his new environment. You will have to be the judge of when or if to stop crating.

Use your common sense when letting your dog have a little more independence in the house. Don't leave your dog alone for the first time for 8 or 10 hours! Start with short trips, like to the corner store, and gradually extend the period of time you are away from the house.

Greyhounds may not know how to ask to go out when they first come off the track. Eventually they develop their own set of signals, but sometimes we don't recognize those signals. Some common signs of needing to go out are: pacing nervously, walking in circles, walking to the door and looking back at you, standing by the door, listlessness, whining, or barking.

When your Greyhound indicates a need to go outside, respond immediately. Don't wait for the next TV commercial, or the resulting mess will be your fault.

If you are still having trouble with accidents in the house, Try keeping a log for 4 or 5 days and see if there's a pattern forming that you've missed and consult a good reference book such as Retired Racing Greyhounds for Dummies by Lee Livingood. Review the following checklist carefully and see if there is something you're not doing.

1. Are you keeping your pet confined when you are not at home or when you are not available to supervise?
2. Are you limiting bathroom walks to 10-15 minutes?
3. Are you walking after meals and at the appropriate times?
4. Did you keep a chart/diary for at least 4 days?
5. Are you feeding your dog at the same time every day, measuring the food with a measuring cup to assure accuracy, not overfeeding, and keeping treats to a minimum?
6. Is everyone in the family cooperating with the housebreaking effort?

6. Are you adding to your pet's confusion by shouting, hitting or otherwise punishing her?
7. Are you certain your dog isn't sick and needs to be examined by a veterinarian? (Worms or urinary tract infections are easily cured but can interfere with housebreaking.)
8. Are you removing the scent of your pet's urine/stool from the affected area?
9. If you have a fenced yard, are you going outside with your pet so that you know whether or not she has relieved herself?
10. Are you praising your dog when she eliminates outside?
11. Are you giving your pet too much freedom in the house?

If you have considered all these factors and are still having problems, please call FoG and let us help you with housebreaking.

## **B. The Great Outdoors**

Greyhounds have been selectively bred for over 7,000 years for a single purpose: to run like the wind. They are sighthounds, and can see small details from half a mile away. They have a peripheral vision that may be up to 270 degrees - literally eyes in the back of their heads! The sight of a small animal (rabbit, chipmunk, squirrel, etc.) or even a plastic bag blowing in the wind, can send Greyhounds into a full run at the proverbial 45-mph. They can reach full speed in 2 body lengths.

When in pursuit of prey, whether real or imagined, a greyhound will not respond to verbal commands. Unexpected noises, such as firecrackers or loud cars, can also startle and panic an unleashed Greyhound. You have about as much chance of stopping a running Greyhound as you do of stopping Mario Andretti in the Indy 500. In a few minutes, a running Greyhound can be miles from home and not even realize how he got there. Or worse, he could be dead in the road.

**The absolute, unbreakable rule for Greyhounds is:**

NEVER LET YOUR GREYHOUND  
OFF A LEASH UNLESS IT IS IN A  
COMPLETELY FENCED AREA.

You may think if you've taught your dog to come when called, and you've had him for a number of years, that he can be trusted off leash. That is wrong. You might be right 99 times out of 100. The 100th time, though, is when your dog will take off. All adoptive families sign a contract with FoG stipulating, among other things, that they will observe this rule. FoG reserves the right to reclaim the dog if we find he or she is being allowed to run free. (Yes, it is that serious!)

There are a few other things to bear in mind about letting your pet outdoors.

- Don't leave your Greyhound unattended in a fenced yard unless you are home to keep an eye on him. He may hurt himself while playing unattended, escape from the yard, be stolen with no hope of return or become a victim of the Florida heat.
- Greyhounds are strictly house dogs and should never be left outside for extended periods of time in very hot or cold temperatures. Their short coat, lack of body fat and thin skin make them susceptible to overheating in the summer and chilling in the winter. Under NO circumstances can you keep a Greyhound in an outdoor kennel or a doghouse.
- When you first get your new dog, you will be anxious to take her for walks around the neighborhood. This is excellent exercise for your dog (and for you!). Just remember that newly retired racers have very soft footpads. Racers have few opportunities to walk on rough surfaces such as blacktop roads or cement sidewalks. Their pads may blister easily when first exposed to such surfaces. Take it easy with your new Greyhound, and let her toughen her pads gradually. If the pads blister, use a sunburn cream with aloe, lanolin, and vitamin E to promote healing.

One more absolute rule. **NEVER** put a Greyhound on an overhead run or tie her to a stake or tree. Remember what we said just a while ago: greyhounds can reach speeds of 45 mph in less than 2



body lengths. If the dog decided to bolt, she may reach full speed before she reaches the end of the rope. The result will be a dead dog with a broken neck. Again, the dog might be fine 99 times out of 100. All it takes is once.

**Fencing.** If you decide to put up a fence for your dog, the fence should be a minimum of 4 feet high. Greyhounds are not jumpers as a general rule, but the rare exception might require a 6 to 8 foot fence. Make sure the gate is at least 4 feet high, too. A low gate is too easy to jump. When the FoG volunteer visits your home for the first time, he or she will advise you of any problems they see in your fencing or yard set up. You may be asked to repair a fence, fill a hole or remove thorny or poisonous plants. Please remember that we are not being critical. It is important to us that the dog be placed in a home to live out the rest of its life. Emergency vet visits, calls to poison control or chasing the dog through the neighborhood do not start things off on their best foot.

While electric underground fencing may work for other breeds of dogs, it will not work for Greyhounds. They accelerate so fast that they are through the fence line before they even feel the shock. The shock will only prevent them from coming back into the yard. In addition, an electric fence will not keep out wild animals, other dogs, or someone trying to steal your dog.

**Exercise.** Greyhounds do love to run and they really do need somewhere to stretch out and do their thing every once in a while. If your hound doesn't have a fenced yard of his own, or even if he does, look for a local dog park.

Have some spare time? Call your city government, parks department or County Commissioner and tell them you'd like to have a dog park in your area. If there's enough interest, they may respond!

Dog Parks are the greatest invention since suburbs. There are more and more of them in the South Florida area and all over the country. Basically, they are fenced sections in a local park that are set aside to let the dogs run free and play together. The better ones have two sides - one for large dogs and one for small dogs. That helps keep the shitzus from tripping the greyhounds! Each park has its own set of rules but some things are pretty universal. You'll have to have proof that your dog has had a rabies vaccine. A current rabies tag will usually do. You'll need to leash the dog going in and out of the park and keep the leash handy in case of problems (they're just big kids after all). And, of course, you'll have to bring those plastic grocery bags for picking up after your little monster! The better ones will charge you admission but it's usually well worth it.

More and more greyhounds are showing up at these parks, too. It's a great place to meet other greyhound people and you'll see a new side of your dog as he gets to know the other regular greyhounds. That pack mentality re-surfaces quickly and you'll get a kick out of watching them run and jump and play together. Plus you'll socialize and share information with other owners and enjoy dog-owner oriented special events and classes offered by the park. Try to go at a regular time on a regular day and you'll tend to meet up with the same people. Just like you get to feel comfortable chatting with people you've met before, your dog will get progressively more comfortable as the friendships develop.

## CHAPTER 6 - GOOD GROOMING

Greyhounds are used to being handled at the track. This makes it easy for you to groom your Greyhound. Here is a recommended schedule.

**EARS** - Weekly - Cotton balls moistened with a mild solution of vinegar and water are a great, non-drying ear cleaner. If your dog swims a lot and need a drying solution, use alcohol instead of the vinegar and water. The stores also sell all kinds of ear-wipe products that are very handy. Q-tips can be used but be very careful. If you're unsure of what you're doing, have your vet show you the proper way to clean your dog's ears.

Pick up some styptic powder, too, preferably the kind with some anesthetic in it, just in case you clip the quick in the nail. (We all do it one time or another.)

**NAILS** - about every two weeks - This may vary with the amount of exercise your Greyhound is getting, and how much natural wear the nails get. Nails should always be kept short enough so that when the Greyhound is standing on a hard surface floor, you can slide a sheet of paper between the nails and the floor. Long nails that click on the floor can cause foot problems because the nails throw the dog's weight off the center of the foot. Sometimes an ex-racer's nails will be quite long when she comes off the track. It takes a bit of work to gradually shorten them.

Your vet can show you how to properly cut the nails. The white nails are easy, as you can see the quicks, but you have to be more careful with the black nails. You can't see the quicks. If you choose to use nail clippers, buy the heavy-duty size. These usually have plastic covered orange or black handles.

The new school of thought on nail care is to use a Dremel tool with a fine sanding barrel. These now come in fairly slow speeds (5,000 to 7,000 RPM) which are recommended and battery operated so there's no cords to snag. But people report just as great a success with the regular, household Dremels which run at up to 20,000 RPM and have cords on them. It may take some getting used to but the results are worth it! A drop of oil on the barrel will reduce the heat generated.

**BRUSHING** - Weekly - You should brush your dog once a week, or more frequently if you wish. When Greyhounds come off the track, they usually go through a period of heavy shedding, due to the different diet at the track and the stress of adjusting to their new environment. Giving them Lipiderm or Prozyme will help their coats improve. Eventually your dog will not shed much. A hound grooming glove, curry brush or shedding blade will pull out your dog's dead hair

Dog biscuits and cow hooves also help keep teeth clean. (In addition to toothbrushing - not instead of) Try giving a greyhound raw carrots! They clean their teeth, massage their gums, and get their vitamins all at once.

*Wilted Greyhounds:*  
A grey can “wilt” or collapse in a very warm bath. Don’t panic. He’s just Super Relaxed!

and reduce shedding. Plus, most Greyhounds love the grooming experience, and it’s a great way for human and hound to bond. The grooming glove, also referred to as the Love Glove, is sometimes available in the dollar stores and is great for baths, too.

**TOOTH BRUSHING** - Daily - Greyhounds do not mind having their teeth brushed, and we recommend that you do this daily. That usually translates, in practical terms, to 3 or 4 times a week. FoG will have had your dog’s teeth cleaned while under anesthetic for spaying or neutering. But greyhounds were never bred to have good teeth - great legs but bad teeth - and follow up is very important. There are doggie dental care kits that contain a special dog toothbrush that fits over your finger and a non-foaming toothpaste.

Only use toothpastes designed for dogs. They are available through the internet suppliers or at your local pet store. The chicken and peanut butter flavors are very popular. Avoid human toothpaste as it foams too much and contains ingredients that would harm your dog if swallowed. (And we have yet to meet a dog that knows how to spit).

The fingertip toothbrushes or even gauze pads over your finger are one option for a dog toothbrush. But greyhound owners always want something better and they have discovered that the greyhounds are very tolerant of electric (spin type) toothbrushes. You can use your old one or buy one of the battery operated disposables. The gentle hum seems to be very calming for them and one minute a day can make a major difference to your dog in the long run.

**BATHING** - as needed - once or twice a year. You do not need to bathe your Greyhound as much as you would other breeds of dogs. The bath at our kennels is probably their first bath in their whole lives. Obviously, if they get into something and smell bad or got really muddy, a bath may be in order. Otherwise, a Greyhound only needs 1 or 2 baths a year. They stay clean and sweet smelling as a rule. When you do bathe your dog, use lukewarm water and a mild dog shampoo without any flea or tick killers in it. Do not use human shampoo, as the chemicals are too harsh for their sensitive skin. If you or a member of the family suffers from allergies, you may need to bathe your dog more often. Greyhounds are very, very cooperative about bathing so this will probably not be a problem. Remember these dogs are thin-skinned and chill easily so be sure to dry him thoroughly and quickly.

## CHAPTER 7 - TOXINS AND POISON CONTROL

Greyhounds are especially sensitive to toxic chemicals because of their thin skin, low body fat and fast metabolism. There are certain substances you must watch out for.

### A. Flea & Tick Products

If you don't have a flea or tick problem, don't use a flea or tick product on a greyhound. Unnecessary chemicals are no healthier for your dog than they are for you. Be especially careful of flea and tick products. What is fine for another breed may be highly toxic for a Greyhound.

Pfizer Pharmaceuticals generously supplies Friends of Greyhounds with serums, test kits, baby books and a great, new product called **Revolution**. (Thank you, Pfizer!) Your dog has received Revolution while in our kennel. This is a once-a-month topical treatment that treats for fleas, ticks and heartworms. Other popular topicals are Advantage (fleas only) and Frontline (fleas and ticks). All of these treatments are sold only by veterinarians or from suppliers if you have a veterinary prescription. They come in small tubes and are applied to the base of the dog's neck once a month. When these dogs arrive from the track, they are usually loaded with fleas and ticks. We strongly suggest you continue a topical flea and tick product for at least four months just to be on the safe side. After that time, your veterinarian will advise you on whether or not your area and your routine merits using a flea/tick treatment.

**Flea Collars.** FoG does not recommend the use of any flea/tick collar currently on the market. Flea collars contain chemicals, which go directly into the Greyhound's bloodstream. They can cause severe illness or possibly death. We suggest you only use topical flea/tick treatments and only when needed.

**Flea Shampoos.** The only flea and tick shampoos that are safe for Greyhounds are those with PYRETHRINS as the main ingredient. Pyrethrins are natural organic compounds derived from chrysanthemums. Do not use any flea/tick product containing organo-phosphates, such as Chlorpyrifos, Dursban, or Defend, or any flea/tick product containing carbamates such as Carbaryl or Sevin.



**Dips. Never** flea dip your Greyhound. The chemicals in dips are too strong, even when they are pyrethrin-based.

**Home Exterminators.** Be careful if you have your house exterminated. Be sure you ask the exterminator what chemicals he is applying inside your home. Many exterminators use pyrethrin-based chemicals, which are safe, but you need to ask, and tell him you have a chemically sensitive animal.

**Lawn Sprays.** Lawn chemicals can be fatal to Greyhounds and some lawn chemicals have been linked to canine cancer. Do not allow your dog to walk on any chemically treated areas. Lawn services such as Chemlawn, Lawn Doctor, etc. are required to mark treated areas with yellow flags or small signs. Watch for those markers if you leash walk. Avoid them until the yellow flag is gone. Most products are no longer harmful after they've dried or been through a rain.

## B. Other Toxins to Avoid

**Chocolate** can be a deadly poison to dogs. It contains theobromine, which cannot be metabolized by most dog's liver. There are a few dogs that are not affected by this but for most of them, a 5 oz. bar of baking chocolate will kill them. Never give your pet chocolate in any form or quantity. If your dog ingests chocolate in any amount, call your veterinarian immediately and treat the event as a poisoning.

**Grapes** and **Raisins** act in the same way as the onions. They are a very recent addition to our No-no list.

Another thing to avoid is **onions**. (Don't panic - I didn't know it either!) The effect is cumulative so it takes more onion to affect a larger dog. However, onion is toxic to dogs and to cats in any form, raw, cooked or even dehydrated like onion powder or onion salt. It affects the red blood cells causing hemolytic anemia about 5 days after ingestion. Giving your dog **Tylenol** or **Acetaminophen** causes the same thing. An occasional hot dog that might have a little onion powder in it probably won't hurt a greyhound. But, not a steady diet of them. The cheese steak and onions is completely out.

Since many greyhound owners also have cats, let me also mention that cats are even more susceptible than dogs and Gerber meat baby food, which used to be commonly used to sustain a sick kitten, now has "improved taste" because they have added onion powder! If the onion ingestion is discontinued, the affected red cells will gradually be replaced by new ones and the body will actually repair itself.

Never administer **human medications** to any animal without the advice of a veterinarian. Be sure to ask how much and how often to give a human medication if your vet gives you permission. Did you know that Tylenol is highly poisonous to dogs and cats? (See 'onion' discussion above)

Did you know that any **ibuprofen** product, such as **Advil** or **Motrin**, will cause acute renal failure in dogs? The only over-the-counter analgesic that is considered generally safe for dogs is buffered aspirin. If your pet ingests any human medication without the suggestion of a vet, treat the pet as a poisoning victim and contact your vet or the National Animal Poison Control Center immediately!

Exposure to **oil-based paints** can cause a variety of reactions in your dog. If you are painting your home with oil-based paints, it is best to arrange to safely have your pet elsewhere. If this is impossible, the dog should be put in a safe and well-ventilated area of the house away from the fumes.

Most **house plants** and many common **outdoor plants** are also toxic to dogs. There are more than 70 different common house and garden plants listed in Appendix A that will poison your pet. Your vet or local agricultural office may be able to supply you with a more complete list tailored to your area. Remember that 5 foot reach when placing house plants in your home.

Do not let your dog drink water out of the **toilet**. Many large dogs will take to this automatically. You can try to break them of this but it's tough. Keep in mind that the bacteria count inside that bowl is phenomenal no matter how often you clean it. Plus, the continuous type of toilet chemicals like Ty-D-Bowl are poisonous. It's a nuisance but if you have dog that does this, you need to keep the lid down or keep the door to the bathroom closed.

**Antifreeze**, like many chemicals found in the garage is extremely dangerous. Antifreeze has a sweet, attractive taste and is a deadly poison to animals. As little as one teaspoon of antifreeze may kill your dog. Many dogs and cats die each year because they are attracted to the sweet taste of antifreeze. Don't let your Greyhound lick those wet spots on your garage floor.

**Insect repellent** may be an attractive idea when your greyhound is being eaten alive by those nasty mosquitoes but don't do it! All commercially available insect repellents contain a chemical called DEET, which is highly toxic to dogs. A safe alternative to insect repellent is Avon's Skin So Soft. Dilute it with water and put it in a spray bottle. This alternative works for people, too.

## **C. Poison Control**

If your dog ingests anything you think may be poisonous, call your vet or the National Animal Poison Control Center immediately. THE NUMBERS FOR THE NATIONAL ANIMAL POISON CONTROL CENTER ARE (900)680-0000 OR (800) 548-2423. Copy these numbers and place them by your telephone. If you call your vet, take the numbers with you in case he needs a fast consultation. The National Animal Poison Control Center is operated by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). It is staffed by veterinarians with special training in toxicology. It is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The calls are not free, but the price is small compared to your pet's life. The 900 number is \$2.95 per minute and is charged directly to your phone bill. The 800 number is a \$30 credit card charge per case. With the 800 number you are given a case number. This allows you to call back as many times as necessary at no extra charge. The vet on call will also be able to communicate with your vet, at no extra charge.



## CHAPTER 8 - VETERINARY CARE & HEALTH MATTERS

**A Special Note:** A good veterinarian is worth his or her weight in gold. A good veterinary staff from the receptionist to the techs is absolutely critical to making a vet good. If the vet is worried about billing or scheduling, he can't worry about your pet. If he is bandaging tails or cleaning teeth, he won't have quality amounts of time to visit with your sick pup and really know what's going on. We at Friends of Greyhounds could not get by without the support of a great vet with an outstanding staff in a terrific medical center.

Your animals can't tell you where it hurts. Most greyhounds in particular will suffer great amounts of pain without so much as a whimper. We had a greyhound come to our kennel whose toe had been dislocated for weeks without care. That dog had been in constant pain and yet he had the sweetest disposition and was so grateful for your attention that he truly stole our hearts. If we humans just stub a toe we'll mope around and snap at people for the whole day - or two! Your vet is critical to diagnosing and treating your greyhound and there is no substitute for a vet and staff with greyhound experience.

***Thank you Welleby Veterinary Medical Center.***

\* \* \* \* \*

### A. Initial Care

You will need to start a regular program for heartworm prevention. Choose a monthly product. **DO NOT** opt for the six-month shot. That has proven to be deadly for greyhounds as well as some other breeds.

FoG has provided the initial veterinary care for your Greyhound. She has been spayed or he has been neutered. Your dog has had inoculations for rabies, distemper, adenovirus, parvovirus, coronavirus and Parainfluenza. He has been tested for heartworm and given a monthly preventative, Revolution. He has been wormed and had his teeth cleaned. You will be given your dog's vet records.

You should arrange to take your new dog to your vet within two weeks of bringing him home. FoG **strongly** recommends that you use a veterinarian with an established greyhound practice. Greyhounds have a unique physiology and not only does the vet need to understand that but the technicians in the office do as well. This familiarity isn't going to happen in an office that doesn't have a regular clientele of greyhounds. These dogs are different and react differently. It never hurts for you to just ask at your vet's office whether the vet has any other greyhounds in their client base. If they have a lot of greyhounds, you have the right vet. If you need a

recommendation for a vet who is experienced with Greyhounds, FoG can help you find one.

Please ask your vet to record your dog's tattoo numbers (found on the medical records we gave you) in his files.

There are several reasons for this first visit. Although we do our best to give you a healthy dog and to explain any known problems, your vet's opinion is the one you trust. Remember, we don't know much about this dog's history either. This is the best time for your vet to meet the new family member and establish a healthy dog profile. Be sure to bring along the veterinary records you received from FoG. You will need to:

- ✓ establish your dog's records with your vet.
- ✓ get a supply of flea and tick and heartworm medication
- ✓ have your dog's stitches removed if needed (2 weeks after surgery)

After this, at your greyhound's annual checkup, he should receive boosters on his shots. Your dog will need an annual rabies shot, a new tag and a Distemper booster. If you keep your dog on heartworm preventative year round as we recommend, you will need to get a heartworm test every two years. Otherwise, your dog will need to be tested annually.

## B. Remnants of Racing Life

You and your vet may notice that your Greyhound has one or more of the following telltale marks of racing life.

**Scars.** This is common, as Greyhounds have thin skin and may have slammed into another Greyhound during a race. In time, most scars get covered with fur.

**Tattered Ears.** Your dog may have tattered ears, or may be missing a piece. This is not uncommon for dogs living in close quarters, as they do at the track. Close living conditions can cause them to squabble, and an ear can get bitten. It does not mean your dog is aggressive.

**Bald Thighs.** Commonly known as "kennel butt" this is not a skin problem. The hair is rubbed away from the thigh area. It may be caused by their diet at the track and/or by being kept in a crate all the time. With a high-quality diet the hair should regrow within 8-12 weeks. Prozyme or Lipiderm will speed up hair growth. If the hair has not grown in within 3 months there may be a thyroid problem, which is discernible with a blood test. It is also possible to have bald thighs and be perfectly healthy, just as some men are bald.

## C. Other Health Matters

**Dental Problems.** Greyhounds can get a heavy tartar buildup on their teeth due to the soft diet at the track. When your Greyhound was spayed or neutered by FoG, we also had his teeth cleaned. Your vet will check them out so he can advise you of any upcoming problems to be alert for. Remember a thorough dental cleaning requires a dog to be under anesthesia. Greyhounds are very sensitive to anesthesia so you don't want to put them under any more than necessary. Keep brushing regularly to avoid the risk of teeth cleaning under anesthesia not to mention the expense.

**Bursars or Swollen Elbows.** Greyhounds have little body fat and almost no padding on their joints. If they are forced to lie on hard surfaces for prolonged periods of time fluid may accumulate. Your vet can easily drain this fluid. Bursars go away when the dog has a soft bed or quilt to lie on.

**Worming.** Three months after you get your dog, your vet may want you to bring in a stool sample for a lab test. This shouldn't entail a complete visit just dropping off a sample to the office. It is done to be sure that the initial worming was completely effective. It sometimes takes a second dose of worming medication to completely rid your dog of worms. If your dog is having trouble with housebreaking, bring in a stool sample as soon as possible.

If stool samples are showing clean and there is still an undiagnosed problem causing listlessness or diarrhea or other general symptoms, have your vet try worming your dog with Panacur and Dronsit. Your dog has probably lived in some dirty, flea and tick infested places in his life. He may have been in various states and any one of a different array of kennels. Those strange fleas and ticks can leave some strange organisms in the dog's body. For some reason, the combination of Panacur and Dronsit has given greyhounds some amazingly good results. It is a de-worming agent and has an immunity booster. It is a little more expensive than the other general worming treatments and your vet may not even have it but insist upon it and stick to your guns. If he can't get it (it's made by Bayer), go find a vet that has it.

**Diarrhea.** Any dog can get "the runs." Some of the common causes of diarrhea are fatty table scraps, cat food, overfeeding, grass, and garbage picking. All of these are controllable and you should take care to avoid them in the future. Diarrhea is also sometimes caused by an intolerance of some ingredients in dog food. For example, some dogs cannot tolerate chicken byproducts, so they do better on

lamb and rice dog food. Some don't handle milk products well so avoid coated foods and milk bones. Also, there are a few Greyhounds out there who suffer from chronic colitis. You will need to work with your vet if you think this is the case with your dog.

Diarrhea can also be caused by stress, and by a sudden change in diet. Therefore, you can almost expect your dog to get diarrhea to some extent during his first week in your home. (Sorry about that.)

**Acidophilus:** Great for combatting even the toughest cases of diarrhea.

However, it **MUST** be the *live* type. It is available at your health food store in the refrigerated section and must be kept cold. Don't waste your money on the pills from the drug store. That's not the same thing. For live acidophilus, give the dog two caps broken open on his food and he needs to eat it right away. Usually two or three doses will cure the problem. It's also available in loose form for Pets and is called Pet-dophilus! Greyt Stuff!

Following are some simple food additives that FoG recommends for combating mild cases of diarrhea:

**Rice** - Add about a half cup to each meal. Use the real, long cooking variety not the instant rice or the boil in the bag kind. Reduce the dry food accordingly.

**Sweet Potato** - bake it or boil it or cook it in the microwave. Chunk up about half of a large one into each meal - skin and all.

**Pumpkin** - not the sweetened pie filling but the plain, canned pumpkin. Add about 3/4 of a cup or more to each meal. Reduce the dry food by about 1/2 a cup.

If these dietary changes do not lead to improvement within a three days, mix a child's dosage of **Pepto Bismol** (caplets or chewables work well) into each meal for the next two days. If you use the Pepto Bismol, it may turn the dog's stool black. Don't panic. It's not blood in the stool. It's just a side effect of the Pepto Bismol.

If all else fails or if you just can't watch you baby go through this any more, buy a bag of **Hills Prescription Diet R/D**. You may have to call around to find it. Usually vets carry it. Our vet told us about this stuff and your vet may know of something equivalent to it. This is a reducing diet dog food. I know your dog is not in need of a diet but it is a great, fast cure for diarrhea. Feed your dog 2 cups of R/D moistened with water instead of his regular food, twice a day. You may add some canned food if you like but not too much and nothing too rich. Judging by our own experience, you will probably see results within 12 hours or less. Keep the dog on this food only for a two or three days. Then you'll have to start weaning him off of it by mixing in a little of his regular food and then at the next meal, a little bit more. Reduce the R/D by the same amount. In 5 to 7 days you should be back on the dog's regular food. If the diarrhea comes back after the dog has resumed eating its regular dog food, consider switching brands of dog food to one that has a different meat base.

If the diarrhea does not respond to home remedies or if you see blood in the stool, contact your vet. Have your vet check for Giardia, which is caused by a parasite and must be treated medically.



**BLOAT.** You may or may not have heard of Bloat or **gastric torsion** but it is a life-threatening emergency and all large chest cavity dogs such as greyhounds are susceptible to bloat. Bloat is a rapid build-up of gas in the stomach/chest area. The stomach twists and significantly reduces the dog's air intake. If this occurs, your Greyhound will lie down and gasp for air. He may also pace continuously. I don't mean to scare you. This only happens maybe once in a thousand dogs but, if it happens, **THIS IS LIFE OR DEATH FOR YOUR DOG.** If your dog gets bloat, you have about 30 minutes to get him to the vet for surgery. Bloat can be avoided by not allowing strenuous exercise before and after eating, eating two moderate meals a day (not one huge meal), and not allowing your dog to gulp excessive amounts of water.

**Anesthesia.** You should be aware that Greyhounds and other sighthounds are unusually sensitive to general anesthesia. Special precautions **MUST** be taken with a Greyhound undergoing anesthesia and you should not anesthetize a greyhound if there is an alternative. Greyhound-safe anesthetics are Telazol or Isoflurane. Barbiturates should never be used on Greyhounds. Before consenting to any surgery, speak to your vet about his/her experience in operating on Greyhounds.

**Happy Tail.** Tail problems are the bane of a vet's existence and greyhounds are particularly prone to them. A large number of our dogs come to us from the track with "happy tail." The happy, loving attitude that makes them special enough to be sent for adoption is the same one that makes them wag their tail. Wagging a long, slender (downright bony) greyhound tail inside a small kennel can cause cuts, open sores and worse. We had a dog arrive from the track with two inches of bare bone at the tip of her tail showing, the tops of each of the tail vertebrae showing, and she was throwing blood in every direction because she was still wagging that tail. Add in the additional problems of blood loss, infection, depressed immune systems and the tape sores that develop from the bandaging that's done to protect the rest of the tail and you can understand the seriousness of Happy Tail. We won't even mention that greyhounds are so thin skinned that getting things like that to heal over is a real challenge.

The solution in extreme cases is to amputate the most critical area and then keep the rest sutured and/or wrapped to allow it to heal. At

FoG we've gone so far as to construct padding to keep the dog's tail from hitting directly against our chain link. We like to think it helps speed the healing process. Who knows.

So, if you see an open sore on your dog's tail do not let it do untended. A simple healing cream with an anesthetic property in it will help a lot. The sooner you begin treatment, the better. Keep an eye on the sore and if it starts to worsen get the dog directly to the vet.

Generally, the vet will apply a topical medication, cover with a non-stick telfa pad and then a gauze, tape and/or vetrap bandage. **Vetrap** is that colorful elastic stuff that clings to itself when pressed. It is water resistant and stays in place without tape. Great Stuff! If your vet has to wrap the tail, a hypodermic cover with the end cut off or an old fashioned hair roller (we can still find them at the dollar store) can be used as a protective cover.

This just in: **Tea Tree Oil** (used to be known as Melaleuca Oil) seems to be even more repulsive to the dogs and will keep them from messing with an injury or bandage.

When your dog's tail is bandaged, watch the techs and ask them to show you how to do it. If the dog throws off or chews off the tail covering you may have to re-bandage it yourself. If you are applying Vetrap, do not stretch the material when wrapping it. Just put it in place and then kind of squeeze it together. Stretching the fabric will cause it to cut off the circulation in the tail and that will slow healing and aggravate the injury. If the dog is chewing off the protective covering, you can try spraying the Vetrap with a **bitter apple** or **bitter orange spray** and see if that stops the problem. Some dogs aren't even slowed up by that stuff but some despise it.

You may have to make him wear his track muzzle. If you need to borrow a muzzle, call us at FoG and we can probably supply one for you. If he licks through the muzzle anyway, use duct tape to close off the bottom half of the muzzle. You may remove the muzzle when you're feeding him and anytime you are right there to watch him but you must replace it as soon as he is not in your control. I know you don't want the dog to live in the muzzle but the better care you take of that injury, the quicker it will heal and everyone's life can get back to a healthy, happy, normal routine.

## D. Allergies (in people)

Many people have some form of allergies. This does not mean you cannot have a Greyhound. Simple procedures and patience will enable you to have a great companion. If you are allergic to dogs, you are allergic to minute allergy triggering proteins, called allergens, which are secreted by glands in the dog's skin. As dead skin cells

flake off, allergens can flake off with them. Allergens are also present in saliva. As saliva on the dog's fur dries, say after it licks itself, microscopic bits of allergen chip off and become airborne. Typically, people are more allergic to heavily undercoated dogs (e.g., Huskies) than to Greyhounds. People are not allergic to the fur itself, but to the allergens attached to the fur. The more fur there is, the more allergen there is floating around to be allergic to.

If you have allergies, there are some simple things you can do to minimize your allergic reaction:

- 1) Try to keep one area of your home, preferably the bedroom of the allergic person, as free of allergens as possible. Try to have the new dog sleep with another family member if you can. Keep the allergic person's bedroom door closed to keep the dog out. In any case, don't let the dog on the allergic person's bed.
- 2) Use a HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) cleaner in the bedroom.
- 3) Use impermeable covers for the mattress and pillow belonging to the allergic person. Mattresses and pillows are permanent reservoirs for allergens unless you cover them.
- 4) Remove all carpets from the allergic person's bedroom. Like mattresses and pillows, rugs trap allergens and keep them near the allergic person. Take up wall-to-wall carpeting if at all possible. Try the minimalist decorating style, and go rugless! It will help.
- 5) Bathe your dog once every 2 weeks. Normally, Greyhounds are clean and sweet-smelling dogs that don't need frequent bathing. For an allergic person, though, regular bathing of the pet is highly recommended.

Experts say that trying just one or two of the above suggestions will not make a significant difference in an allergic person's response to an animal. People need to do all of the above, all at once.

There are additional steps you can take which will also help minimize allergy problems.

- Groom your dog twice a week. If possible, have a person in the household without allergy problems do the grooming. Groom outdoors, weather permitting.

- Consider getting a "shorter haired" Greyhound. There are differences in Greyhound coats, and some dogs have a very minimal coat.
- Don't get your dog when your allergy sensitivities are at their peak.
- Use a thick blanket or quilt as a dog bed, and wash it every week.
- Don't allow your dog up on your furniture.
- And lastly, have patience! The worst time is usually the first two weeks. Usually after two months even the most severe reactions settle down. Once your allergies subside you may be able to relax some of these precautions.



## CHAPTER 9 - ESTATE PLANNING FOR PETS

Those of us who are pet owners will often go to great lengths to comfort and care for our furry family members during our lifetime. Most of us are also very much aware of the importance of estate planning for our loved ones after we die. Unfortunately, we forget that pets are loved ones, too, and often provisions are not made for their care after our death.

Once your dog is addressed in your estate, please consider that a final gift to Friends of Greyhounds can go a long way towards helping other dogs, too.

(And it's good for your Karma!)

In the eyes of the law, in most states, animals are considered personal property. They are treated the same under the law as an article of jewelry or furniture. If no will exists, the animal goes to the heir of the estate. If no heir exists or if the heir does not want the animal, it will go to a humane group, the animal shelter, or be euthanized. Please make your heirs aware of FoG's adoption contract provision: ALL FoG-PLACED GREYHOUNDS MUST RETURN TO FoG FOR PLACEMENT. Please specify that your Greyhound **must not** be sent to the animal shelter or be euthanized.

If possible, make financial provisions for your pet in your will, as well as for your two-legged loved ones.

Four options are:

- (1) Direct money to care for the pet for life;
- (2) Conditional money based upon care for the pet;
- (3) A non-charitable trust;
- (4) A conditional trust.

If your dog will be returning to FoG should you die, even a small income for the care of the dog for the rest of his natural life can make all the difference. We often have people, particularly older people, who have a tremendous love for animals and may even have greyhound experience. They are willing to take on an older dog but may be afraid because an older dog often means more medical bills that their fixed income cannot handle. A small stipend left by you can bridge that gap and provide a good home for your loyal friend.

The financial option you select can be controlled by your executor, an identified individual, or FoG. Your personal situation determines which choice is best. We strongly recommend that you consult your attorney or estate planner.

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From Jerry and Michelle, co-founders of FoG and all the volunteers who make this whole thing work, Thank YOU for giving your dog a Greyt home. Keep in touch - Send pictures! See you at Woofstock!