



**CONGRATULATIONS!  
YOU ARE NOW THE PROUD  
PARENT OF A GREYHOUND!**

**A LITTLE HISTORY**

The greyhound is an ancient breed of dog and can be traced back to Biblical times in Egypt, Persia and the Middle East. It is one of the purest breeds. For centuries, greyhounds were bred to hunt by sight and by out-running their prey. They are also the fastest breed of dog and can achieve breathtaking speeds in excess of forty miles an hour over short distances. They are simply beautiful in their graceful conformation and their regal bearing.

The dog, which is now your pet, was bred and raised for one purpose...to be a racing greyhound. It is the product of a carefully selected breeding of sire and dam. Its puppyhood after whelping was spent with its mother and siblings in a special brood bitch house at the breeder's farm. After weaning, your dog was raised with its siblings in long outdoor runs to encourage its strength and development. At the age of about twelve months, your pet made the transition from puppy to pup and was "brought inside" to begin its formal training as a racer.

From that day forward, your pet lived in a crate or cage in a kennel with about 40 other greyhounds. Its life became highly regimented

and for the next four months it was trained to chase, beginning with chasing lures in an open field and on a whirly gig, and then graduating to a training track - a miniature version of the pari-mutuel greyhound track where it would ultimately perform. There it was schooled, with one or more other greyhounds, to spring from the starting box and chase a mechanical lure as fast as possible, all while negotiating flat turns, staying away from other racers and keeping its legs on the bottom.

At the age of sixteen to twenty months, your pet began schooling at a real racetrack. First, it was hand slipped half the distance around the track to become familiar with its surroundings. Then it was schooled unofficially out of the starting box with three other dogs. Finally, it was schooled officially in non-betting races with seven other greyhounds. If it was able to run faster than the track's established qualifying time, it graduated to betting races and its career as a racing greyhound began.

If your dog is over the age of three, it is probably a "track dog". If it is two years old or younger, it probably has not been able to compete successfully on the track. In either case, it should make a fine pet. The owner of your greyhound made an investment of at least \$2,000.00 to raise the dog to track age. We can assure you that your adopted greyhound is a truly unique animal, a fact that will be reinforced by admirers every time your pet appears in public.

**IDENTIFICATION**

Your dog is also unique because of the tattoos in its ears. The breeder applied the tattoos when your pet was still a puppy. They are intended to provide permanent and positive identification of your dog.

**Inside the right ear** you will find a series of two or three digits followed by a letter. This indicates when your dog was whelped (born). The digit just before the letter is the last digit of the year and the other digits are the numbers of the month. For instance, 28A indicates the dog was whelped in February (2) of 1988 (8) and 117H indicates that the dog was whelped in November (11) of 1987(7). The letter identifies each dog from its littermates, as the numbers of their tattoos are otherwise identical. The letter is the order of pups born; A=1, B=2, etc.

**Inside the left ear**, you will find a series of four or five digits. That number is the letter registration number assigned by the National Greyhound Association. Those numbers were checked each time your dog raced to insure the integrity of the race.

These tattoos can still be quite useful to you and your pet. They deter theft and can result in the return of your pet should it ever stray or become lost. Anyone who is familiar with greyhounds will check the tattoos and report them to the National Greyhound Association (NGA), P.O. Box 543, Abilene, KS 67410 (913) 263-4660. NGA maintains a computerized registry and can advise the name, address and telephone number of the registered owner of the greyhound.

All racing greyhounds have two names; their registered name (as printed in the racing program, must be unique and cannot contain more than sixteen letters and spaces) and their "kennel name " which is generally a short name by which the dog is called in its kennel. For example, the registered name may be "SUNDEE EXTRA" becomes "Dexter" which is the name to which he answers. You will be told your pet's call name if we know it, if you would like to change it, eventually your pet will answer

to any name you like.

Your pet will come with a new martingale collar and lead, along with GCGA I.D. tag. If the tag is lost, be sure to notify us and we will supply you with another. It is meant to be the secondary identification. In addition, we recommend that you get your own I.D. tag with your address and/or phone numbers. We also recommend you consider micro chipping your dog, which can be done for a small fee by your local veterinarian.

### **REGISTER YOUR GREYHOUND PET**

*You can officially register your greyhound pet with the official North American Greyhound registry, the National Greyhound Association.*

For only \$30.00, you'll receive a beautiful, suitable-for-framing registration certificate that carries all pertinent information on your greyhound pet: official NGA name, pet name (optional), color, sex, whelping date, two-generation pedigree, and complete Bertillon markings.

To further assist in the effort to find good homes for greyhounds, a portion of your fee, (\$10.00) will be sent by the NGA to the greyhound pet agency of your choice when you register your greyhound as a pet. In this way, you can assist in finding a home for other retired greyhounds. Requirements for an NGA pet registration are as follows:

- 1) Blue pet-transfer application, signed by record owner
- 2) \$30.00 fee mailed to:  
National Greyhound Association  
P.O. Box 543  
Abilene, Ks. 67410

## **THE FIRST FEW DAYS WITH YOUR RETIRED RACER**

**1.** Keep the first few days calm and low-key. Give your greyhound time to adjust to new surroundings and family. Visits from friends and relatives can wait until he/she feels more comfortable. Avoid constant contact for the first week. Too much attention during this time will make it more difficult when you must leave him/her alone for the first time.

**2.** When you first arrive home with your new greyhound, keep them on the lead and walk them around your house, introducing them to furniture's, doors, windows, your pool, if you have one, etc. You can do this by walking around and tapping on the items. Even though your greyhound has been in a foster home, your home is a new environment for them that they need to get used to. We recommend you put tape on your glass windows or doors so the dogs understand these are not something they can walk/run/jump through. We recommend you initially limit their access in the house to areas where you can monitor them. For example, close bedroom and bathroom doors in the house in the beginning and slowly open and allow them free access as they become comfortable in your home. If you own a pool, be mindful of your greyhounds awareness of it. Greyhounds are not typically known as dogs that can swim. Due to their minimal body fat, they are actually more likely to sink than swim.

**3.** Introduction of your greyhound to other family dogs should be done outside (a muzzle is provided if your current dogs are small and if you have cats). Take a short walk before going inside. The muzzle should also be used in the fenced yard with other dogs.

**4.** Keep him on lead during inspection of his new home. If he lifts his leg (or she squats),

calmly say "outside" and quickly go there. Heap praise if business is finished outside. Take him/her out every two hours (through the same door) to the place where he/she first did his business and shower him/her with praise each time he/she eliminates. Allow for potty time each evening just before going to bed and immediately every morning. They are quick learners and will catch on before you know it.

**5.** Getting on furniture and beds is off limits for the first few weeks. If you want your greyhound to sleep with you at some point, you will invite him/her to do so. He/she needs to know this is a privilege, not a right.

**6.** It is preferable that he/she sleeps in your bedroom on his/her own bed, especially the first night. An old comforter makes an excellent dog bed. Keep the door closed/gated for a few nights to keep the dog in with you. If he/she needs to go out, you will most likely feel a wet nose on your face or hear some whimpering.

**7.** By the second day, you should begin to help your greyhound get used to being alone. Crate him/her and leave for an hour or so. Repeat this later in the day and, if possible, during the next few days, gradually increasing the time in between.

**8.** Frequent walks and the use of a rubber brush or mitt will be especially appreciated by your pet.

**9.** Make an appointment with your veterinarian within the first month:

- Bring in medical and shot records
- Purchase monthly preventative heartworm and flea medications. Be sure to consult with your veterinarian on type preferred for greyhounds, since they can

be very sensitive to certain brands (as previously mentioned, they do not have a high % of body fat and their bodies metabolize at different rates that other dogs)

Your vet will want to review and copy the medical history. Remember, your greyhound needs a check-up yearly. This check-up should also include stool exam and a heartworm test.

**10.** Sign up for an obedience class - a wonderful way for your new greyhound to build self-esteem and bond more quickly with you and your family. Ask your local rescue group if you need recommendations.

## **OTHER PETS IN YOUR HOME**

**GCGA** suggest that when you arrive home with your new greyhound that you bring your other dog/dogs outside to meet the new pet. (Outside is a more neutral territory, unclaimed by the pet that has been living within your house for a period of time). You should then take a 15-minute walk so that they can get accustomed to one another. After the walk, they may enter your home together. It is always advisable to muzzle your animals while outside off lead or inside the house when you are away. Muzzling can prevent unfortunate encounters that are unpredictable and may cause injury to one or more of your pets. Thunderstorms are a prime example of such occasions that may cause behavior that is not normal. Some dogs are frightened by thunder and lightening and without your comforting presence, a normally calm, quite dog may react to fear in unknown and potentially harmful ways.

After some months in your home, your greyhound should come to have respect and

consideration for your other pets. During the interim, however, your vigilance in the home and always keeping your greyhound on lead while walking outside of your fenced yard should prevent unfortunate events with other animals you may encounter.

If you have a cat and have given us this information, we have probably "cat tested" your greyhound. We therefore believe that your greyhound will get along with your cat. Remember, every cat-dog relationship is different and you should therefore be cautious. If you feel your greyhound and cat are not getting along, contact us at once. If you do not have a cat in your household, your greyhound may have been chosen for you knowing it is not good with cats and other small animals, but will fit in fine with your home. If you decide to bring cats or other small animals into your home at a later date, please do it cautiously.

## **IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER**

Dog ownership can be extremely rewarding. You receive unconditional love and a friend that is happy simply to be near you. It is also a huge commitment, an added expense, and lots of work so be prepared to put in the work to get the best possible outcome.

**Ex-racing greyhounds must not be exercised off lead unless in a safely fenced area.** If you do not have a fenced in yard of your own and wish to exercise your Greyhound off lead, you should scout your neighborhood for a suitable fenced in area. Tying out a greyhound is extremely dangerous. They aren't used to being tied up and due to their quick acceleration, 45 mph in 3 strides, they can severely injure themselves when they come to the end of the tie out.

## **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

### **Adopting the Racing Greyhound**

By Cynthia Branigan

### **Retired Racing Greyhounds for Dummies**

By Lee Livingood.

### **Childproofing Your Dog**

By Brian Kilcommons and Sarah Wilson.

If you have children under the age of 8 years, you are encouraged to read the book.

If you're adopting "for the kids", please be realistic. Regardless of all the pleading and promises, the reality is that you will end up doing the bulk of the dog walking, feeding, care, and training. In-home and back yard play will need to be supervised at all times by an adult. Respect between children and the dog must go two ways.

## **THE ADJUSTMENT PERIOD**

From the moment you walk away with your new pet, you both will begin an entirely new life. The radical changes in your hound's environment and expected behavior will require a period of adjustment that can last for a few days up to a few weeks. However, your greyhound is an intelligent and sensitive dog that is eager to please you and be accepted. With attention, patience, understanding and a little good humor, the problems, which may be encountered during the adjustment period, can be minimized for you and your new pet.

Bear in mind that your dog has lived its entire life with other dogs and not with people. It has never been inside a car and it has no idea of where it is going or what is expected of it. Be reassuring to your new pet during the ride

home and perhaps have someone sit with it in the back seat so it will not become frightened. We also recommend you put a soft blanket or pad down for your dog. When you arrive at home, it is best to walk your dog around your yard for a while in case it needs to relieve itself.

Since your greyhound is to be a house pet, you will need to introduce your other dogs to him outside in your yard first. Once in the house, while he is still on lead, walking through the house so he can become somewhat familiar with his new "kennel". Remember that your pet has only been in a foster home for a short while and has most likely never climbed stairs and hasn't had much practice navigating a slippery kitchen floor, seen a mirror or glass door or heard a telephone ring. Just as your pet was taught to race, you must teach it to adapt to its new life.

Family members and guests should be instructed to take special care to tightly close doors when entering and leaving the house and to be watchful that your pet does not slip out. It is recommended that you train your pet not to go through an open exterior door until you have given permission.

Stairs may pose a particular challenge to your new hound. You can help it meet that challenge when the time is right by taking your pet firmly by the collar while gripping the handrail with your free hand. Coax your greyhound slowly up the stairs, one step at a time, until you have reached the top, offering praise and words of encouragement along the way. Assist your pet down the stairs even more carefully as its first inclination may be to jump all the way down the stairs in a single bound. After a few days of assistance, your greyhound will be charging up and down the stairs as though he/she had been doing it all his life.

Full-length mirrors and glass patio doors are special hazards for your new pet. At best, a sore nose may result from these hazards. At worst, a badly injured pet may be the result of unsupervised encounters with these unfamiliar items. We recommend you put tape on your glass doors and windows when first bringing home your greyhound so they can see that it is not something they can walk or run through. Screens are also unfamiliar to your new pet, and if not properly introduced, your greyhound may make a "doggie door" that you had not planned on.

As your hound becomes more familiar with its surroundings and its expected behavior, you can increase the areas to which he/she is allowed access. While you are away from home for any length of time, it is advisable to restrict your pet to a single room, or better yet, to place it in a crate. Wire crates, at least 36Wx48Lx30H, are best for restricting your greyhound while you are away. Although your hound may not be entirely happy about being so restricted while you are away from home, it is preferable to the problems that may occur if you allow your dog the run of the house during your absence. You should never leave your greyhound crated and alone for more than eight hours though, as it will need to be relieved, watered and given some attention. It is recommended that the collar be removed when placing greyhound in its crate to avoid it getting caught in the cage.

Although some owners of pet greyhounds allow their dogs to sleep with them, others crate their pets at night. If you crate your dog at night, you may find it will whine, cry or even bark because it is lonely and insecure. This problem usually abates after awhile. Placing the crate in your bedroom where your pet will be consoled by your proximity can often minimize the loneliness. You can also feed your pet in its

crate so it associates crating with a pleasurable experience. Leaving a radio playing softly near your greyhound when it is alone and crated can also lessen anxiety.

Your pet has lived in a temperature-controlled environment since the age of one year. Other than during turnout to relieve itself and when racing, it has been kept sheltered and warm. Also, greyhounds of normal weight have very little body fat, and all greyhounds have sparse coats of short fur. As a result, they do not tolerate cold temperatures at all. When the temperature drops below 40 degrees Fahrenheit, resting greyhounds begin to shiver and become uncomfortable. When the temperature drops below freezing, they are subject to frostbite and hypothermia. Similarly, greyhounds left outside for long periods on very warm days may suffer heatstroke and hyperthermia.

When outdoors, greyhounds should be contained by a fence not less than four feet high and which will not cause injury to the dog. Care should be taken that gates are always closed securely and that the dog cannot dig its way beneath the fence. Greyhounds should never be left alone tied with a rope or chain between a stake and collar. Your pet may be accidentally strangled as a result, or may break its neck if it runs to the end of its tether. Swimming pools can present a special hazard to dogs. Although all dogs can swim, they can drown as a result of simply being unable to climb out of the pool. Many greyhounds will actually sink due to their lack of body fat.

## **BONDING**

Perhaps the most endearing quality possessed by almost all greyhounds is the strong bond they form with those who care for them. Greyhounds have long been totally dependent upon their human caretakers. From the time it was "brought inside" as a pup, your greyhound has relied upon its trainer for its every need. It was turned out of its crate to relieve itself about 6:30 each morning. After being returned to its crate in a half hour or so, it was fed its morning meal. (In some kennels, this is the only meal of the day. Other kennels feed twice daily. The number of meals per day is the only difference in routine for all greyhounds). After the morning meal, the greyhound then rested until mid-morning turnout at about 10:30 (assuming it was not racing that day), then rested until evening turnout at about nine, then was put back into its crate and slept until first turnout the next morning. This routine was repeated every day, seven days a week. All of the greyhounds were keenly aware that their trainer provided for their every need and that they could count on him arriving at the same time every day. This routine may sound boring, but to a racing greyhound, it signified security and assurance.

Not only was your pet's environment confining and its daily schedule routine, it also had to compete for even a moment of its trainer's attention. Being only one of about forty racers in the kennel, it waited anxiously for a pat on the side or a word of encouragement from the moment it heard the trainer's key in the door and the lights were turned on. There is a lot of work to be done in a racing kennel every day and little time for a trainer to spend with any individual racer.

Now, in a short time, your greyhound is no longer confined in a crate, subject to kennel routine or competing for attention. It can roam your home and yard. It can play or rest or turn out whenever it wants. And most importantly, it has your love and company and attention. For that reason alone, you will probably find that your new hound will be reluctant to let you out of its sight. Your pet fears that if it cannot see you that you no longer exist - that if you leave it alone, unlike its trainer, you may never return. So your pet may follow you from room to room like a shadow, wagging its tail when you glance in its direction or offer a word of praise. Soon you will have more than a pet; you will have a loyal and lifelong friend and companion. There may be no other breed of dog that bonds with its owner more closely than the greyhound.

Most owners of pet greyhounds find these attentions to be flattering and endearing. But such close bonding can sometimes cause a problem called "separation anxiety". When you leave your greyhound alone, it may shiver, whimper, cry, bay or even bark. Worse, if you leave it unrestrained, it may chew on furniture or other household articles or he/she may relieve itself on the floor or carpet. These actions are efforts by your pet to express its unhappiness at being denied your company and your attentions. They usually pass with time as your pet becomes more secure in the knowledge that you will return home. The symptoms of separation stress are but another reason why we encourage you to accept our earlier suggestion to crate or restrict your pet when you are not at home.

## HOUSEBREAKING

Racing greyhounds are "kennel broken", meaning that they will not soil the place where they live and sleep. In the racing kennel, your pet lived in a crate or cage and was "turned out" to relieve itself four times each day and always at the same times. For that reason your pet will look to you to allow it to relieve itself.

Your challenge, therefore, is to teach your new pet that the inside of your home is its new "kennel" and that the outdoors is the "turnout pen" where it can relieve itself. As soon as you arrive home with your new pet, you should take it on lead to the area where you wish for it to go. When it has relieved itself, you can safely bring it into your home for the first time.

For the first few days you will need to turn out your greyhound frequently. The change of environment, general excitement and constant availability of drinking water will cause it to need to urinate more often than usual. Always take your pet on lead to the same location and offer it lots of praise when it empties its bladder or bowel. Eventually you will be able to reduce the number of turnouts to three each day. Greyhounds are truly creatures of habit and have unfailing biological clocks. Turning them out on a regular schedule will reduce the number of "accidents" that might otherwise occur.

Some greyhounds may be reluctant to relieve themselves when on lead, but time and patience will usually overcome this idiosyncrasy. Be sure to give your pet plenty of time to clean out completely. Try not to distract it while it is in the process of doing its "duty".

During the first few days at home, a few accidents are all but inevitable. If you are present when an accident occurs, immediately

take your pet aside and admonish it with a few harsh words. Then take it to your turnout area so that the message to your pet will be clear. Praise your greyhound when they go to the bathroom outside. Remember that your pet is used to being turned out at the same time, up to four times each day. Try not to wait for your greyhound to signal you that it must relieve itself. Greyhounds are used to relieving themselves when they are turned out

Sometimes accidents are not accidents at all. All un-sterilized male dogs mark their territories with their urine and greyhounds are no exception.

Be sure to clean any areas where such accidents have occurred with a solution of vinegar and water so that your pet will not sense the need to remark the area another time.

Your pet will probably drink much more water than usual during its first few days in your home because water will always be available, unlike the kennel environment when water was available only during turnouts. Nervousness may also increase expiration of moisture through panting, increasing your pet's thirst. This increased intake of water is another good reason for you to turn out your pet frequently for the first few days.

With a little patience and sensitivity, your new pet will soon be completely and permanently housebroken. If accidents persist beyond ten days or so, you should consult your veterinarian or call your **GCGA** representative. It is possible that the underlying cause of such accidents could be physical, such as a urinary infection or infestation of parasites, or that the problem can be eliminated by a suggestion from another greyhound adopter who has had a similar experience.

## FEEDING

Your new pet has been fed a racing diet since it was brought inside the kennel at the age of one year. Its racing diet has been very carefully designed and prepared, and the amount of food provided to your greyhound was calculated each day to maintain its racing weight exactly to the pound. Its diet usually consisted of raw meat - principally lean ground beef- mixed with a quality dry kibble, and cooked vegetables such as spinach, celery, carrots, turnips and tomatoes. As an active racer, your pet was fed several pounds of this diet each day. Vitamins were added and hormones were used to prevent females from coming into heat. Sometimes your hound was fed canned mackerel and cooked rice or white bread to keep from becoming bored with its diet.

As a pet, however, your greyhound's dietary needs will be quite different. Many adoptive greyhound owners prefer to allow their new pets to gain three to five pounds so that they will not appear to be emaciated or "starved". When you first obtain your pet, you will wish to inquire what weight it raced at. Your **GCGA** representative can also advise you whether your pet is at its optimum weight or if it needs to gain or lose a few pounds. One of the first things you should do is to take your pet to your veterinarian's office and have it accurately weighed. Make note of that weight and continue to weigh your pet on the same scales every month or so until its weight reaches optimum and stabilizes. This will enable you to adjust the amount of food your greyhound receives so the diet you eventually create will exactly support your dog's optimum weight.

**GCGA** will offer you recommendations regarding the type and amount of food to offer

to your pet, at least initially. As a general rule, a dry dog food (kibble) will be suggested, and the amount will probably be approximately 3 ½ cups per day depending on what you are feeding them (could be less for greyhounds under 65 pounds and more for greyhounds over 75 pounds). A quality, name brand feed is likely to be the best nutritional choice. Read the labels and avoid feeds with less than 20% or more than 27% protein or more than 12% fat. Avoid feeds that contain artificial colors, feeds that make "gravy" when water is added, those that are moist or soft and those, which have large chunks. It is very important that you use a raised feeder (at least 12" or more off the ground) when feeding your greyhound. Those can be purchased online or at your local pet store.

Though individual preference will prevail, most owners feed their pet greyhounds twice a day rather than just once. A feeding in the morning and one just before the family eats dinner seems to work well in most households. Such feedings, if offered just before you eat, will minimize your dog's "begging" at your table during your meal times. Free feeding (always leaving food available to your pet) is to be avoided since former racers simply do not have the experience or self-control required to prevent over indulgence and rapid, excessive weight gain. When feeding, remember that it is always easier and less traumatic for your pet to gain weight than it is to lose weight. This is not to say weight gain is good, just the opposite. If you allow your pet to gain weight excessively, it will be difficult and somewhat traumatic when the time comes to lose that weight.

Aside from medical care, maintenance of a proper diet is the most important consideration that you can offer your new pet. Aside from

chasing the lure and your love and companionship, food is the most important thing in your greyhound's life. From the time your pet gets up in the morning until it goes to bed at night, food and eating occupy its mind. Indeed, it has been suggested that greyhounds are simply fur-covered eating machines. If this is the case, feeding time should be fun for both you and your greyhound.

You should feed your pet in the same place and at about the same time every day. If you have more than one dog, be sure to feed them separately and monitor their feeding so there will be no quarrels and each dog will be able to finish its own meal completely and at its own pace. A healthy greyhound, given the proper diet and the correct amount of feed, will quickly eat his meals and look around for more.

It goes without saying that fresh water should always be available to your pet, day and night, whether it is indoors, outdoors, or in its crate.

## **EXERCISE**

The exercise requirements of a retired racing greyhound are no different from those of any other large breed of dog. Long walks, two or three times a week are good for greyhound and owner alike. If there is a large, fenced area nearby, you can let your pet run until it tires and returns to you. Two or three vigorous sprints each week will keep your pet fit and healthy.

Generally speaking, the younger the greyhound, the greater the need for regular exercise. As greyhounds become older, they may become reluctant to go for very long walks or to sprint or run without an incentive. Should your greyhound reach that age, it is probably best to accede to his/her wishes. To do otherwise may only make him unhappy and risk

injury to his pads, feet and muscles. If you need a walking companion, you might consider adopting another younger greyhound.

Be sure not to exercise your greyhound for at least an hour after he has eaten. Vigorous exercise immediately after your greyhound has consumed a meal can result in a condition called "bloat". Bloat can result in the dog's stomach becoming inverted or "flipping over". Bloat can quickly cause death, often before the problem is diagnosed or medical treatment can be obtained. Be careful about exercising your pet on very warm days as it can easily become overheated and suffer convulsions, heatstroke and kidney damage. Be sure to give your greyhound all the water it desires after exercising so that it may replenish its body fluids and avoid dehydration.

Never take your greyhound for a long run. Greyhounds are sprint animals and are not conditioned for long runs or even long walks. Condition them slowly as you would your own body.

Some greyhounds when left alone become upset and restless. A good walk before leaving them often helps to alleviate such stress.

Your pet is lead broken, meaning that it has been taught to walk on a slack lead. You should always keep your pet on lead whenever it is outdoors unless in a fenced-in area. Your greyhound should walk quietly on lead without pulling or straining. However, if it becomes startled or excited it may bolt. Since the greyhound's head is about the same size as its neck, it may back out or "slip" its collar, so never attach a lead to the snap collar. Always use a martingale collar with the lead. A sturdy nylon lead, four to six feet in length, with your hand inserted through the loop is the surest

protection you can afford your pet during its walks.

## **TOYS AND TREATS**

Most greyhounds like plush toys that make noise as their favorite playthings. Toys with hard plastic eyes and noses are not recommended as they can be bitten off and swallowed easily. Dental bones make excellent treats, as do hard, crunchy dog biscuits. If you plan to give rawhide treats, it is recommended that you buy rawhide made in the U.S., as it does not have chemical additives that some foreign manufacturers use. Pig ears have very high fat content.

## **GROOMING**

Greyhounds, because they are kept indoors as pets, are generally very clean animals. They have no "doggy" odor, even -when wet. Their coats are light and short so that shedding is not much of a problem. Loose fur is easily removed by use of rubber palm-curry brush or a hound glove. A tablespoonful of vegetable oil added to your pet's diet once a week can aid in keeping its coat shiny and will reduce the amount of dandruff resulting from dry skin.

Although frequent bathing of your greyhound should be avoided, you may wish to wash your pet from time to time as may be necessary. Specialized pet shampoos with balanced Ph. formulation especially for dogs are available. Dawn dish soap also works very well and is gentle on your dog. Be careful not to get shampoo in your pet's eyes or water into its ears. Be sure to rinse your dog very thoroughly to remove all soap residues and dry its coat well before allowing it out of doors or into a drafty area.

You may also wish to clean your pet's ears from time to time. The best way to do so is by gently

wiping the inner folds of the ear with a cotton ball or tissue moistened with rubbing alcohol. A cotton swab can also be used to clean the smaller folds of the outer ear, but great care should be used lest a sudden movement by your pet cause the swab to enter the middle ear and cause painful injury to your pet. When they are clean and healthy, your greyhound's ears should never have an unpleasant odor. Special ear cleaning preparations are available at most pet shops or your vet.

Your pet's nails will also require attention from time to time. Special canine nail clippers are available as are files and rasps to help you keep the nails trimmed and smooth. When using nail clippers, avoid cutting too deeply, as you may cut into the "quick" of the nail. This is not only painful to your greyhound, but also results in bleeding which is hard to stem except through the use of a styptic pencil or Kwik-Stop styptic powder. It will also make your pet nervous and hard to control the next time you need to trim its nails. It is better to do the clipping often, just cutting back slightly each time. If done as a regular routine, your greyhound will not balk at the procedure. It is important to use a good quality clipper. It is also a good idea to be prepared with the blood stop the first time you attempt to trim nails.

You should also routinely examine your dog's teeth to be sure they are clean and in good health. Frozen raw turkey necks are an excellent and tasty way to keep your pet's teeth clean. Given once a week, you will have great results. Excess plaque and tartar buildup is as bad for your dog as it is for you. Not only can it result in bad breath, but also in tooth decay and gum disease. If you notice plaque and tartar buildup or breath with a foul odor, it is wise to consult your veterinarian to prevent long-term damage.

## GREYHOUND MEDICINE

The greyhound is a healthy breed of dog and your pet should remain in good health throughout its approximately eleven to fifteen year lifespan. You can enhance its natural good health by providing it with proper diet, exercise and preventive medical care. Though there is no substitute for professional veterinary medical care, you can help ensure that your pet remains a vigorous and good-looking greyhound.

Trauma or accidents are the greatest hazard for your new pet. Never let your greyhound off-lead unless in a completely fenced-in area. Be alert for hazards in your home and vehicle as well. Greyhounds are often unfamiliar with their new environments and are sometimes injured when they try to run through glass patio doors, fall down stairs or slip on wet tile or linoleum floors.

Be especially alert for possible hazards in fenced-in areas where your greyhound is permitted to run and play. This breed has very delicate skin that can easily be torn on a protruding nail or wire. Their bones are more susceptible to accidental fractures. Garden tools, broken fencing, thorny brush and even holes in the ground can cause serious injury to your new pet. Greyhounds have also been injured when riding unrestrained in cars and trucks due to sudden stops or turns. Be sure to keep household cleaners, solvents, antifreeze and other chemicals that can cause accidental poisoning safely away from your pet. Your greyhound has entered a new world that is fraught with hazards it cannot imagine. It is your job to make that world as safe as possible for your new pet.

**GCGA** requires all adopters to keep their new pets inoculated against certain communicable canine diseases including rabies, distemper and parvovirus. Your veterinarian can advise you further regarding rabies and DHLPP vaccinations and when booster shots will be necessary. While in our care, your greyhound was given DHLPP and rabies shots in addition to dental cleaning. It was also tested for heartworms and is heartworm free. A heartworm preventative must be given each month, beginning as soon as you receive your dog. Your **GCGA** representative will tell you when the next treatment is due. Flea prevention is also advised based on weather in your area.

Parasites can be a common problem in all dogs, greyhounds included. You should check your pet for indications of external and internal parasites from time to time. Your veterinarian can also perform this function during your pet's annual physical examination.

External parasites can include ticks, fleas and other bloodsucking insects. Ticks are small, flat brown or reddish brown eight-legged arachnids that attach themselves to the skin with their mouthparts. You should check your pet for ticks from time to time by combing and watching for any of these pests that you may dislodge from its fur. Check especially the inner folds of the ears and the webs between the toes. If you should discover a tick, remove it from your pet's flesh by grasping it near the head with a pair of tweezers and carefully pulling it free. Ticks can also be safely removed by coating them with Vaseline or petroleum jelly, which will cause them to detach themselves from your pet. After removal, kill the tick by burning it or immersing it in alcohol. Ticks carry diseases that can make your dog (or you) ill. They go about their business so quietly they may be unnoticed by

you and your pet unless you make it a point to be alert for their presence.

Dogs will sometimes be affected with mites, which are very tiny, spider like animals. You can't see them move. They are usually found within dogs ears and can be killed by washing the affected areas with cotton dipped in rubbing alcohol. There are specific medicines for mites readily available.

Fleas can sometimes be a problem as well, especially if your pet has been exposed to other dogs and their surroundings. Fleas are blood-sucking insects with six legs and an ability to jump far distances. Like ticks, they can carry diseases and can spread from dog to dog, and dog to humans. Unlike ticks and mites, the bites of fleas will cause redness and itching of your pet's skin. Your greyhound will scratch the bites and try to "de-flea" itself by nibbling the infested fur with its front teeth. Do not use a flea collar on your greyhound and do not administer any internal preparation designed to kill fleas. Never permit your greyhound to be dipped into an insecticide bath of any kind. Greyhounds do not tolerate pesticides very well and they could prove toxic or fatal to your pet. Should you have any question about the treatment of your greyhound for fleas, it is best to consult your veterinarian.

Internal parasites are common in greyhounds and represent a serious health threat. Such parasites can include tapeworms, roundworms, hookworms and pinworms, all of which can take up residence in your pet's gut. Your dog can contract worms by eating uncooked infected meat or the stools of infested dogs, or by ingesting fleas. Left untreated, internal parasites can have a seriously adverse impact upon your pet's nutrition and general health.

You should, from time to time, examine your

pet's stool for evidence of worms. Live and dead worms or worm segments that look like grains of rice and may or may not show movement are tapeworms. Tapeworms are usually found outside of the stool. Roundworms are round as their name implies and are usually found in clusters of adult specimens up to six inches in length and normally show movement. Pinworms are more difficult to find, but can sometimes be seen about the anal opening when they emerge to lay their eggs.

One indication of possible worm infestation is if your pet suffers weight loss despite no reduction in its appetite or food intake. Rectal itching causing regular biting or licking of the anal area can also indicate the presence of worms. If you suspect your pet may have worms, you should provide your veterinarian with a fresh stool sample in a sealed plastic bag. If infestation is confirmed, the parasite will be identified and your veterinarian will treat your pet with an orally administered worming medication. You should not attempt to worm your pet without the advice of your veterinarian, as all wormers are not only toxic to parasites, they are also toxic to dogs. Over worming can result in your dog becoming ill or worse. Since worming preparations kill only adult parasites, your veterinarian will probably give you a second warmer with instructions to administer it to your pet in ten days or two weeks. Such treatment is usually completely effective, though reinfestation can quickly recur if your pet continues to be exposed to such parasites in its environment. The risk of reinfestation can be greatly reduced if you collect any stools in your turnout area and dispose of them as soon as possible; at least once a week, or daily if your yard is small.

Aside from problems with parasites, your greyhound should otherwise remain in good

health. Sporadic vomiting may sometimes occur. This is usually the result of vigorous exercise too soon after eating, drinking too much water too quickly or the ingestion of grass, bone fragments or foreign objects. Vomiting should not be cause for concern unless it continues without apparent cause or if there is blood in the vomitus. Diarrhea in greyhounds can also present a special challenge to the owner of a house pet. This problem is usually diet related, but can also be triggered by stress, disease, worms, or a change of environment. Aside from being unpleasant for you and your pet, if left untreated it can result in dehydration and even death.

Should your pet suffer diarrhea, it should be walked or turned out frequently, as it will usually be unable to contain its bowels. You should try to determine what triggered the diarrhea and correct the cause. Patent anti-diarrheal medicines should be administered in half the adult dosages. The diet should be supplemented with cottage cheese, cooked rice, or canned pumpkin. If the feces do not begin to firm into stools within two days, you should consult your veterinarian. If diarrhea is severe, serve cooked rice with cooked lean ground beef mixed in.

After you have owned your greyhound for a while you will become sensitive to its appearance and behavior. Though it is normal for a greyhound to spend nearly the entire day napping, it should be eager to go for a walk or to play with very little encouragement by you. It should have a good appetite and eat its food eagerly and with relish. Its coat should be smooth and shiny and its eyes clear and bright. Its teeth should be white and its gums pink. It should be happy, inquisitive, ever hungry and eager for all the love and attention it can command. Its temperature should fall within the

range of 101 to 102.4 degrees F., with 101.5 being the average temperature. And yes, it should have a cold, wet nose. You will eventually become aware of those subtle changes in your pet that can signal a health problem.

Again, should you suspect that your greyhound has a health problem; you should consult your veterinarian right away.

**It is important that you use a vet that is familiar with the greyhound breed.** GCGA recommends the following vets in the Pinellas County area:

*Animal Hospital of Dunedin*  
1355 Pinehurst Road, Dunedin, FL 34698.  
Phone: 727-733-9351  
*Dr. Bartholomew and the rest of the staff are excellent!*

*Sun-Surf Animal Hospital*  
1507 Gulf Blvd, Indian Rocks Beach, FL 33785.  
Phone: 813-595-8188.  
*Dr. Parades and his staff are wonderful!*

## SPAY/NEUTER

All animals adopted from **GCGA** are spayed or neutered prior to going out for adoption. Although some risk is associated with any surgical procedure, that risk is far outweighed by the benefits from the sterilization of your pet. In addition to the principle benefit of eliminating the possibility of unwanted puppies, you and your pet will enjoy a number of other advantages.

In male greyhounds, aggressiveness and "leg-lifting" will be reduced or eliminated. Possible enlargement of the prostate gland will be minimized and the likelihood of certain cancers will be lessened. Castration is the preferred method of sterilization for male greyhounds as it eliminates the possibility of testicular cancer or injury to those vulnerable parts of your pet's body. Spaying of females will eliminate their coming into estrus (heat), which is unpleasant for you and your pet. A "hot bitch" is an irresistible enticement for every unsterilized male dog in your neighborhood. Any spaying by ovariectomy reduces the risk of uterine infections and cancers, both of which are common in bitches that have not been so altered.

Greyhounds do not tolerate anesthetics or sedation well. They have relatively little body fat and thus are unable to absorb lipid soluble thiobarbiturates to any significant degree. Such thiobarbiturates therefore, remain systematically active for a greater period of time. Consequently, greyhounds are especially susceptible to hypothermia and hypertension while anesthetized with thiobarbiturates. Keep this fact in mind so you may talk to your vet about the pros and cons of future medical or dental procedures that require anesthesia.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU LOSE YOUR GREYHOUND

As careful as most adopters are, at some point, your greyhound may get loose. The following steps will help you find your greyhound as soon as possible.

- Do a quick search of the area.
- Take your mobile phone and a favorite treat, toy or dog friend, a collar and attached lead, even if the dog was wearing a collar when lost. It is easier to slip the entire set over the dog's head than onto the dog while trying to attach the lead to the collar.
- If you see your dog and he is moving away from you, squat down and his curiosity may get the best of him to investigate. You might also try running away from the dog and he may chase after you. Don't worry about out-running him. He will catch you!
- After a few minutes of search in the immediate neighborhood, take your car and widen your search. A running greyhound will usually run to the left like he did on the track.
- Call **GCGA**, your local humane society/animal shelter, and nearby veterinary clinics, as these are the agencies/organizations most likely to receive a call if someone finds or sights your dog (especially if there is no collar with telephone numbers or an address to read). If you have micro-chipped your pet, do call the company you chipped them with. This number should be saved into your phone so you can access it easily in time of crisis.

Give the following information to those agencies/organizations you call:

- When, where and under what circumstances the greyhound got loose.
- If there have been any sightings – where and when
- A complete description of the greyhound – gender, size, color, markings, collars, Tags, ear tattoos; also the dog's personality, shy, friendly, etc.
- Who you adopted the dog from and how long you have had the dog.
- Who else you have notified
- Any recovery attempts made so far and the results (sightings, near misses, etc.)

Enlist family, friends, neighbors and those who are nearby that can possibly provide immediate help in your or adjacent neighborhood(s).

While searching, it is extremely important to have someone near or have the telephone for reports of a sighting so that the search can be redirected if necessary.

Place food and crate by the house and, if possibly, near the last sighting.

Distribute flyers in your own and adjacent neighborhoods with the basic description of the dog and a telephone number to call. The flyers might be placed on telephone poles, in supermarkets, given to mailmen, children, delivered door-to-door.

After the first 24 hours, widen your search area by 5 – 10 miles. Start calling other police departments, humane societies, veterinary clinics, etc.... **DON'T GIVE UP!** Most are found within 7 days when they get tired and hungry. **THEY ARE SURVIVORS!**

Once your dog is **FOUND**, it may be necessary to take the dog to the veterinarian. Depending on weather conditions, extreme heat or cold or visible signs of illness or injury, take him/her to a vet ASAP to be examined. **DO NOT SCOLD!** LOVE! Your pet will need extra reassurance at this time.

## **A FINAL NOTE**

All of us at **GCGA** sincerely hope that you will enjoy your new family member and that you will remember the commitments that you made when you adopted your greyhound:

1. You will not use your pet for pari-mutuel racing
2. You will keep your dog on a leash whenever he/she is not in a fenced area.
3. If you should ever find yourself unable to provide for your pet, you will contact a **GCGA** representative so that we can find it another good home

We need your help in achieving our goal of placing more racing greyhounds as pets. Tell your friends about **GCGA** and how they, too, can adopt or foster a racing greyhound. Distribute **GCGA**'s literature where dog lovers and other potential adopters can see it. It is a satisfying experience to know that you have been responsible for finding a home for yet another homeless greyhound.

As a not-for-profit organization, we operate on a very limited budget. Our largest expenditures are for advertising, veterinary care, printing and postage. All donations directly benefit homeless racing greyhounds and are both welcomed and acknowledged. Please know that your check, made payable to **GCGA** and mailed to 1261 Starboard Key, Tarpon Springs, FL 34689, will be greytfully received.

We sincerely thank you for adopting your greyhound. All of us with **GCGA** are here to offer you and your pet any support that you may require. We hope you will become an active member of our organization and help us to meet the challenges we face in finding good homes for good greyhounds.

As the owner of a pet racing greyhound, you have a truly unique companion. Though greyhounds have been used to hunt game, to course and to race for a very long time, they have only recently gained popularity as pets and companion dogs. For that reason, the breed is not well known and all of us are still in a learning process regarding our relationships with our pet greyhounds.

You can help us to increase our knowledge about greyhounds as pets by sharing your experiences with us. Write to us, call us, or email us and share your experiences as an owner of a greyhound pet. What you have learned and observed and enjoyed may be of help to another greyhound adopter.