



Greyhound Pets of America-Atlanta/  
Southeastern Greyhound Adoption

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# GREYHOUND ADOPTION MANUAL

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This manual is based upon and adapted from a manual for Greyhound adopters developed by our friends at Greyhound Options, Inc. in Massachusetts, whose help and advice was invaluable in the early days of Southeastern Greyhound Adoption (SEGA). The revisions and updates in the manual are contributions from many SEGA volunteers and the SEGA Screening and Placement Committee. Thank you, one and all!

“He is your friend, your partner, your defender, your dog. You are his life, his love, and 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

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## INTRODUCTION: THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL ADOPTION

Congratulations! You have brought home a splendid companion and friend. Thank you. You have helped the volunteers of Southeastern Greyhound Adoption (SEGA) provide a home for an outstanding canine athlete.

**The information and advice in this manual for Greyhound adopters is, we believe, essential to assist 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 and years of experience of our volunteers and other Greyhound adoption groups in helping thousands of racing Greyhounds make the transition from track and kennel life to the life of a pet and full-time companion. It is essential that each member of every family adopting a Greyhound read this manual.

Adopters who have owned dogs most of their lives may be tempted to think that “a dog is a dog” and that their 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 is also what creates a few challenges in helping them complete a successful transition from one “career” to another.

The best advice we can give you is to treat your Greyhound like a dog and not a human. Unlike the typical family dog who has spent most of his life with people and not other dogs, Greyhounds have had the opposite experience. They have spent most of their life interacting with other Greyhounds.

We truly believe that if you will follow the advice in this manual and call us early and often to discuss any problems you will decrease the chances of an unsuccessful adoption and a return of the Greyhound to us to almost zero. The return of a Greyhound is a “no win” situation for everyone involved. It is an emotional wrench for the adopter, it requires SEGA to find a foster home for the dog (thus 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 this 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 by his unconditional love and affection.

Please read on, and above all, have fun with your new friend!

*We truly believe that if you will follow the advice in this manual...you will decrease the chances of an unsuccessful adoption and a return of the Greyhound to us to almost zero.*

## SECTION 1: KEY CONTACTS

### Screening and Placement & Running Mates

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## SECTION 2: THE 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 the former racer make a smooth transition into your home rather than running around shopping for supplies.

**Note:** You will **NOT** need to purchase a collar and lead. A new Premier martingale collar and 6-foot lead are included in your adoption fee. SEGA will also provide a very humane plastic muzzle, which is an excellent safety device for introducing your new

Greyhound to the family cat or a dog and for other pet friends and neighbors. These are the same muzzles that are used in the turnout yard on the track, so your Greyhound is very familiar with the muzzles.

Most of these items can be purchased from local pet supply stores, such as PetSmart, Petco, or Pet Supermarket. For those who like to order online, we recommend 1-800-PetMeds at [www.1800petmeds.com](http://www.1800petmeds.com), KV Vet Supply at [www.kvvet.com](http://www.kvvet.com) or 800-423-8211, PetSmart at [www.petsmart.com](http://www.petsmart.com) or 888.839.9638, Care-

A-Lot Pet Supply at [www.carealotpets.com](http://www.carealotpets.com) or 800-343-7680, and Drs. Foster & Smith at [www.drsofostersmith.com](http://www.drsofostersmith.com).

The Greyhound Starter Kit consists of:

- A crate
  - Food and water bowls
  - Dog food
  - Bedding
  - Stain remover (just in case)
  - A Kong toy
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### **Crate**

A crate is one of the best investments you can make toward easy home acclimation and dealing with separation anxiety. Racing Greyhounds sleep and eat in crates in their racing kennels, and many will consider them their own personal space in which to relax in your home. 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. The Vari-Kennel is slightly less expensive and less heavy, while the metal crate is airy like racing kennel crates and is collapsible, making it easier to transport and store.

If you decide on the Vari-Kennel type, the “500” or “extra large” size is appropriate for all but the biggest males.

In the metal crate, we recommend the Midwest brand, available from KV Vet Supply and at local pet stores. The 508 size is usually right for Greyhounds under 70 pounds and has dimensions of 28”W x 42”D x 32”H. The 510 size is usually right for Greyhounds over 70 pounds and has dimensions of 30”W x 48”D x 35”H. We recommend the “fold and carry” styles for ease of travel and storage.

### **Food and Water Bowls**

We recommend stainless steel food and water bowls. They are easy to clean and will last a lifetime. We suggest that you purchase a 2-quart bowl for food, a 3-quart bowl for water, and a 1 cup measuring cup.

### **Dog Food**

We recommend a premium dry dog food, such as Nutro, Eukanuba, Best in Show, California Natural, Canidae, Flint River Ranch, Innova, or the Red Bandanna varieties. Try buying a small (5 or 10 pound) bag first to make sure it agrees with your Greyhound.

### **Bedding**

Greyhounds need a well-padded bed because let’s face it, they’re bony! All of the pet supply vendors have nice selections of dog beds with removable, washable covers. The right size rectangular bed is 34” x 44” or larger while a 50” or larger diameter is the right size in a round bed. A pile of old blankets and comforters also work nicely.

For the crate, you will want to bed it down with a couple of comfortable blankets. We do not recommend using a brand new bed or comforter yet because it could be destroyed during the adjustment period.

### **Stain Remover**

We hope your new Greyhound won’t have any accidents, but the reality is that all dogs occasionally do and it is best to be prepared. In our experience, the best stain removers for pet accidents are Nature’s Miracle or Simple Solution. Follow the directions on the container.

### **Kong Toy**

This hard rubber toy is virtually indestructible and is a great way to relieve boredom and satisfy a Greyhound’s desire to chew. We will explain more later. Purchase the large size.

### **Other Items**

The following items can be bought at your leisure:

**Identification tag.** Buy a personal identification tag with at least your street address and telephone number on it. We suggest you put both your cell and work phone numbers on the tag if possible. Have your Greyhound wear both the SEGA tag and your identification tag on his collar. We suggest you get this as soon after your adoption as possible.

**Toys.** We suggest fleece stuffed toys, large squeaky toys, and tied rope bones. You may want to take your Greyhound along with you to pick out some toys that he likes! Avoid vinyl, plastic, and nylon toys such as Booda bones or Nylabones. The plastic or nylon fragments are indigestible and can injure your dog’s intestines. We do not recommend Greenies as recent information indicates these are not good for dogs.

**Chewies.** The right “chewie” is also a good way to help your Greyhound maintain dental health. Also effective are cow hooves, paddy wacks, and bully sticks available from most pet supply stores.

**If you decide to use rawhides, do so with caution.** Read the label before you buy. Make sure they are American made and processed without lime, bleach, or arsenic, all of which can make your dog very sick. Don’t leave your dog unattended when chewing a rawhide, as he could choke on a piece.

If you have two or more dogs, separate them before giving chewies to avoid arguments.

**Pooper scooper and/or plastic bags.** Be a good neighbor and pick up after your Greyhound on walks. It is also a good idea to keep

your own yard clean. You can also use the plastic bags from the grocery store, Ziplocs, or bags specifically for picking up poop.

**Nail clippers.** Buy the heavy-duty size clippers. These usually have plastic covered orange or black handles.

**Grooming tools.** Use the hound grooming glove or Love Glove for both bathing and removing shedding hair. The key is to scrub the coat in a circular motion both against and in the direction the hair grows. Finish up by rubbing the coat down with a dry cloth. This helps to remove any dander you loosened up. Most Greyhounds love the grooming experience if you use the right touch.

**Ear cleaner.** Use Oti-Clens, R-7, or other vet-recommended product.

**Flea and tick products.** More information on flea and tick products is contained in Section 10.

## **SECTION 3: PREVENTING BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS**

In a Greyhound’s mind, you are either a follower or a leader. Your Greyhound will be watching your behavior to try to determine its pecking order in the “pack.” A Grey-

*Adopt when you have several days in a row to help your new Greyhound adjust. It is best if the first few days are quiet.*

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hound is happiest and easiest to live with when he is confident that his humans have everything under control. When he feels he is in charge it can lead to stress, fear, anxiety, or aggression.

From day one, you should disagree with any behavior you do not want to spend the rest of your Greyhound's life putting up with. While it may take some work from you on the front end, it is well worth your investment in the long run. For example, a spray bottle filled with water works great for discouraging barking or crying. Rather than use your hands, use your feet to push an excited, jumping Greyhound out of your space. When you walk your Greyhound, make sure you are walking him and not him walking you. You should decide which direction to go, how fast to go, and when he can stop to sniff. No matter what you do, be consistent and firm.

We are strong believers in "prevention." The following are suggestions for helping to prevent behavior problem that can occur in all dogs, but that we are frequently asked for help in solving in newly adopted Greyhounds. They are only intended to be used for the first few weeks. Soon after, you can settle into your routine and begin fully enjoying life with your new Greyhound.

#### **When to Adopt**

We suggest you adopt when you have several days in a row to help your new Greyhound adjust and to implement some of the suggestions outlined below. It is best if the first few days are quiet. You should not have company staying with you or neighbors and children stopping by to see the new addition for a few days. Your primary focus should be on preparing your Greyhound to be an enjoyable pet for the next 10 or more years. You will have plenty of time for fun and showing off later.

*Don't shut him away! Greyhounds are very social and want to be part of your life.*

Once you have returned to work, if you are employed full-time, try to go home for lunch for a few extra days. Push your lunch hour later and later each day until finally you do not come home until after work. Once acclimated, some Greyhounds can be left for about 8 to 10 hours, but if you are regularly gone longer than that you will need to come home from lunch each day or hire a dog walker.

#### **Crating**

Initially it is often a good idea to use a crate since Greyhounds are, generally, crate trained. However, "crate trained" does not mean "housetrained." Crate trained dogs can be very easy to housetrain, but you must train.

Crates should be at least 30 inches tall for small- to medium-sized Greyhounds and taller for the larger Greyhounds. Your Greyhound should not have to duck his head when standing in the crate and he or she should be able to turn around when inside. It should be comfortable and roomy, especially if your Greyhound must spend the entire day crated while you are at work. Bigger crates are better.

The crate should be placed in an open area where your Greyhound can see all around. You do not want to create a claustrophobic feeling. Bed the crate down comfortably, but use something that you do not mind having destroyed. Don't use a brand new \$50 bed in the crate yet. While crating is helpful, it should not be over used. We hate to see Greyhounds that are crated all night and all day. Such a life can be boring

and un-stimulating and can lead to behavior problems. Your Greyhound should be given the opportunity to "earn" his freedom eventually.

#### **Preventing Separation Anxiety**

Separation anxiety is one of the top reasons Greyhounds are returned by exasperated adopters. It is common in Greyhounds because they have never spent anytime alone, having been in a racing kennel with upwards of 50 Greyhounds for their entire lives. Often well meaning adopters do all of the wrong things and actually encourage the separation anxiety problem. Greyhounds can be very destructive and hurt themselves during these anxious times, so it is best to prevent it. Here's how:

It is very important that you are careful not to be overly indulgent, sympathetic, dotting, or stifling toward your new Greyhound for the first few weeks. Remain guarded and composed, and not overly emotional initially. We believe it is truly best if you handle your Greyhound unemotionally while he adjusts to his new life.

Greyhounds often bond very quickly and intensely, so it is necessary to take steps to encourage independence. The reason for this is that your Greyhound is used to sharing human attention with many other dogs at both the farm and the kennel where he has spent his life. An entire family for one Greyhound can be compared to a drug induced high. It is wonderful to feel loved. However, if given too much attention too soon, your Greyhound is much more likely to suffer from withdrawal (separation anxiety) when you have to leave him alone. Your Greyhound should be required to "earn"

your affection. You should ignore your Greyhound if he is demanding a lot of attention. This is very much a "tough love" approach and it is highly recommended for the short- and long-term benefit of you and your hound. This is only necessary until he has settled into your routine and home life. You will have the rest of his life to love him all you want.

1. For a couple of weeks, spend several hours each day ignoring your Greyhound until he has adjusted to your work schedule and has shown that he is relaxed about being alone. We suggest that everyone in the house agree on a specific period of time to ignore the new dog. We know this is difficult, but this means no petting, no talking to, and no responding to your Greyhound. Pretend that he does not exist. This helps your Greyhound learn to be without you while you are still there, increasing independence.
2. For the first few days, practice crating your Greyhound as you go about your business in your home or take short trips from the house. Practice coming and going making sure that you have your shoes on, grab your keys, and go out the door, but come right back. Leave and enter the house through all possible doors. Acclimate your Greyhound to you going in and out of sight. Your time is well spent doing this over and over and over again for the first few days rather than bonding.
3. It is also important to make crating and being alone as pleasant and positive as possible. Feed your Greyhound's daily meals in the crate. Provide food stuffed Kongs or marrow bones. Hide kibble or treats under the crate bedding. All of these suggestions give your dog something to do, provides stimulation, and makes the crating enjoyable especially while he is alone. Do this a few times

- while you are home, so your Greyhound associates good things with being in his new crate. This is a good time to practice suggestion 2 above.
4. It is normal for Greyhounds to vocalize while crated in a new environment. It is important that you do not praise this behavior by going back into the room and trying to calm him down. It will teach your new addition that crying will get your attention and you will come back. Ignore him and continue your business. Return as soon as your Greyhound quiets down) which can take quite awhile, so please be patient).
  5. When it is time to go back to work, get in the habit of providing food stuffed Kongs each morning before you leave the house. Check out the website <http://www.neversaynevergreyhounds.net/kongs.htm> for suggestions on stuffing Kongs. Again this provides the dog with something enjoyable to do and changes the focus of each morning. Instead of worrying about you leaving, he will hopefully be excited about his special treat.
  6. For a couple of weeks, ignore your Greyhound in the morning before going to work. Any form of exercise is great, but avoid petting and talking to your Greyhound. This helps to make your departure less dramatic and difficult to endure. Leave a radio on so there is some background noise.
  7. We also recommend ignoring your Greyhound when you first get home. If he is very excited, give him a minute to settle and quiet down in the crate. Then take him straight outside. Again, you do not want to create a lot of drama. Greetings should be calm. You want your routine to be “no big deal.”

### **Housetraining**

The key to housetraining is prevention. The best possible situation is if your Greyhound never has the opportunity to use the house as a potty. Here are some tips to make that possible.

When you arrive home take your new addition on leash to the area where you want him to regularly do his “business.” You probably will not want your Greyhound in the habit of going potty right outside the door, so we suggest you keep him on a leash initially even if you have a fenced yard and take him to an area more appropriate. If your dog starts to pee or poop, softly say “go potty” or something similar. You can condition your dog to potty on cue if you say your key words consistently. As he is finishing up, say “goooooohhh boy (girl)” and give lots of praise. If he does not “go” after a few minutes, go back inside.

Keep your new Greyhound on his leash as you both walk around investigating the house. Be aware of any signs that you Greyhound may eliminate in the house (sniffing, tail extended, etc.). If he looks as if he has to go or if he begins to go, immediately pick up the leash and take him outside. If not, after a few minutes, go back outside and try again. Keep repeating this pattern until he potties outside. You want to start him off with the RIGHT idea. If your new Greyhound is too shy to potty on leash and you have a securely fenced yard, take the leash off. Stay close by and offer verbal praise when he does finally go.

**For the first week, supervise, supervise, and supervise!** Use your crate when you cannot supervise. Keep your Greyhound in the same room with you. You can keep your Greyhound leashed and tie the lead around your waist.

If you catch your Greyhound going potty in the house, distract him with a firm “NO” and clap your hands to divert his attention. Take him out immediately. Keeping him on a leash for a couple of days while indoors makes it easy for you to take your Greyhound out in a hurry. Your Greyhound does not know the rules. It would not be fair to punish him. You simply want to distract him from going potty and take him straight outside.

If there is an accident, clean using a good “enzymatic” cleaner intended for pet accidents. Otherwise, pets will keep returning to the same spot. We recommend Nature’s Miracle, Folex, Oxy Clean, or Simple Solution. AVOID Woolite or Resolve.

Once you think your Greyhound is becoming housetrained (several days later), drop the leash. Allow your Greyhound to wander around the house dragging the leash and you close behind. Watch for ANY signs that he may eliminate. Signs may include suddenly getting up from a nap, circling, sniffing, pacing, panting, crying, or staring at you. If all goes well, gradually trust your Greyhound more and more. **You will never regret taking your time in housetraining, but you may regret allowing your Greyhound too much freedom too soon.**

Most Greyhounds will not alert you if they need to go outside. They are used to being on a predictable routine, so we suggest you set a schedule as soon as possible. They are very much creatures of habit, and to date have had a very regimented schedule all of their lives. If your Greyhound has been in foster care, be sure to ask the foster

person what schedule the Greyhound had been on. It may be necessary to adjust the Greyhound’s previous schedule to be convenient for you, but understand that you have to allow some time for this adjustment.

If you do not have a fenced yard, you will want to take your Greyhound to the SAME spot of the yard every time to do their “business.” Often owners make the mistake of taking their dog for a potty walk and turning around to go home as soon as the dog potties. This will teach your Greyhound to “hold it” as long as possible, so that the walk is as long as possible. You want your Greyhound to learn the difference in a potty walk and an exercise walk. We suggest that longer, fun walks come after your Greyhound has eliminated in the designated area. This will teach your Greyhound to go as soon as possible, so that the fun walk can begin.

Remember that you should not hit, yell at, or rub your Greyhound’s nose in any messes that he makes. They will learn to associate that their “business” is bad, not the act of doing so in the house. Rather, positively and proactively teach your Greyhound how to behave appropriately. Housetraining takes patience, timing, prevention, consistency, and most of all...**supervision.**

### **Feeding**

Require that your Greyhound wait calmly to eat. When you place the food bowl down, block your Greyhound from accessing the food. Use your body or hand to keep him several feet away from the food. When he calms down, stands, and finally looks at you for direction, you can then tell him “OK” and release him to eat. Your Greyhound will quickly catch on that being patient earns food faster. Eventually, you may even want to teach your Greyhound to sit down or lie down, other great things to ask of him, before he is allowed to eat.

*The key to housetraining is prevention. Remember, you should not hit, yell at, or rub your Greyhound’s nose in any messes that he makes.*

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## **Bedtime**

Most Greyhounds quickly adjust to sleeping in their own beds on your bedroom floor and we do recommend that you allow them to sleep in your bedroom with you. Like many people, Greyhounds don't want to sleep alone.

During the first few nights, your Greyhound may want to pace around the room rather than sleep. Since we recommend that your crate be in an open area, it usually is not in your bedroom. Instead of having to move your crate into and out of your bedroom everyday, you can set up a little barrier for a couple of days to encourage your Greyhound to quickly settle down and stay on his bed. No need for a fancy barrier. Use chairs, luggage, a laundry basket, a hamper, etc. to construct a temporary barricade between the bed and a wall for a couple of days. Be creative. Remember that you probably will only need it for a couple of days.

Also, many Greyhounds will wake you up crying for the first few nights. Keep in mind that racing Greyhounds do not have someone letting them out in the middle of the night when they live at the racetrack. We suggest you do not encourage this bad habit. Again, do not try to calm or comfort your Greyhound. It will only serve as reinforcement and a reason to continue crying every night. Give him a couple of minutes to settle down on his own. Often they cry because they feel unsettled in new surroundings. Watch for signs that your Greyhound may have to potty. New surroundings can certainly upset a Greyhound's potty schedule, so be aware.

## **Common Sense Approaches**

Greyhounds are generally gentle and loving pets. However, please take your time in getting to know your new pet.

Be careful when waking your sleeping Greyhound. A small percentage of Greyhounds have what is called sleep space aggression. Having been kept in crates for much of their lives, they are not used to being awakened suddenly or having anyone or anything come in close contact with them while they are sleeping, as they have slept to date in a crate alone for their entire life. For most, this is not a problem, but a small percentage do awake very startled and react in a defensive manner. We suggest that you test your Greyhound by gently waking him up from a distance. For example, gently toss a stuffed animal close to your sleeping Greyhound. If your Greyhound wakes up very startled, contact SEGA for suggestions in desensitizing your Greyhound. For now you want to be careful not to wake your Greyhound suddenly. Wake him up from a distance, calling him by name before approaching. Place his beds out of high traffic areas. Again, this is not a problem in most Greyhounds, but please test yours.

Also keep in mind that this is a strange dog that you do not know much about. Early on, your Greyhound will not know if you or he is going to be the boss of the house. Therefore, we do not recommend that you love on and cuddle with him while he is resting. Again Greyhounds are not used to being disturbed while resting and may growl if a strange person (you) is invading his space. Resist hugging around his neck, as some may find this threatening rather than affectionate. Later on Greyhounds usually welcome the attention, but wait until everyone is familiar and knows their place and rank in the home.

Your new Greyhound should NOT be allowed on your bed or other furniture initially. This is a privilege that you might eventually allow him to "EARN," but it should not be his right. Keeping him on the floor is best **especially if you have or plan to have kids**. If ever you decide to invite him on the furniture, only do so if you feel you can easily move him or ask him to get off. Do not allow him on the couch just because he gives you cute puppy dog eyes. You are the one that owns the couch and if you cannot act like you own it, then do not share it with your dog. He has to "earn" it or you may find yourself being the one asking if you can get on the couch.

Also, do not expect to be able to take toys and food away from your Greyhound immediately. Most people know better than to do this with a strange dog. A Greyhound is no different. Your Greyhound won't know who is the boss yet and may nip you on the hand (again, to date they have eaten every meal in their crate, undisturbed). Instead, trade a treat for the toy. Drop a couple of treats near by so your Greyhound has to move away from the object he has. Just be sure to pick it up when he is eating the treats. If you must remove food from your dog you would be safer using tongs. Or use the bristly end of a broom to gently separate your dog from the food. Please allow your new Greyhound to eat without disruption from children and other pets as well, especially for the first few months.

## **Counter Surfing**

Counter surfing is a common tall dog problem. Food items left on counters may be taken and eaten by your Greyhound. The easiest way to solve counter surfing is to set

your new Greyhound up so that the first experience is unpleasant. We all know that they will try it, so we might as well control the situation. You can set up your Greyhound up by taking several empty soda cans and placing several rocks, screws, or coins in

the cans. Place some tape over the opening in the top of the cans and attach string to each can either by tying it to the tab or by taping it. At the other end of the strings, bring them all together and attach them to a dog biscuit. The strings should be long enough for the cans to be as far back as possible and for the dog to be on the way down from the counter before the cans begin moving. The beauty of this is that you do not have to be in the room and you are not the bad guy. Most dogs find the noisy fall of the cans frightening and decide it is not worth pulling items off of the counter. If your Greyhound is not noise sensitive, you can use the cans as an alarm and storm into the kitchen and give him a firm "No."

Be sure to set up the kitchen table and different sections of the counters. Also use different treats. Dogs are not good at generalizing. They may have to do it 2 or 3 times before they really figure out that counter surfing is not worth it. While the trap is set, make sure all other counters and tables are clear.

Lastly, the most effective way to prevent counter surfing is to make sure nothing is ever available. Use your cabinets, dog proof containers (available at pet supply vendors), and the top of the refrigerator to store food.

*Initially, allow your Greyhound to sleep in your bedroom, but not in your bed.*



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## SECTION 4: INTRODUCING CATS (AND SMALL DOGS)

We have tested your Greyhound's interest in cats and small dogs prior to adoption. However, Greyhounds are animals, not machines, and therefore not totally predictable. Testing is not 100% accurate. We ask that you follow these directions when introducing your new dog to your cat. These directions can also be applied to the introduction of your Greyhound to smaller dogs.

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 few days or you could have an enraged cat. You may want to consider **keeping the cat and the dog separated** by a closed door for several days, so the cat can pick up the dog's scent without having to deal with him. Several times allow your cat to investigate the areas the Greyhound has been, making sure your Greyhound is carefully confined safely away from where the cat will be. Some cats are extremely threatened by a dog in the house, and need time to get used to the idea.

When you first introduce your cat to your Greyhound indoors, make sure the Greyhound is muzzled and leashed. Hold the leash in your hand. **Leave the cat on the floor.** A cat held in your arms looks more like a squeaky toy than a member of the family. Look for the following signs in the Greyhound: teeth clicking or snapping, alert ears, fixated stare, intense attention, and/or lunging. This by itself could just indicate curiosity, as this is the first time your Greyhound has seen your cat. It is not a good sign if your Greyhound cannot move his attention away from the cat. It is normal for Greyhounds to be curious or attracted to movement of the cat, but a potentially cat tolerant Greyhound can usually look away from the cat. If you suspect your Greyhound is potentially not cat tolerant, call SEGA at once. You may need to exchange your Greyhound for another one.

For the next day or two, your Greyhound should always be muzzled **AND** leashed when not safely separated from your cat. Your Greyhound may lunge when he sees your cat run through the room or leap onto the couch. While leashed, you want your Greyhound to see as much of the cat as possible doing the things that your cat does so you can instantly stop your Greyhound from chasing the cat and to firmly tell him "No." Once your Greyhound stops responding to movements of the cat and you feel **very** comfortable with how they are interacting, you can take off the leash while supervising, but we recommend you continue to muzzle. **You will never regret taking your time in really making sure that your Greyhound is cat friendly.** Once you are completely comfortable with your Greyhound's behavior, you can begin supervised interactions without a muzzle.

In many cases, Greyhounds that test cat tolerant will get along just fine with the cat. To be on the safe side, though, you should **always** keep your Greyhound and other small animals separated when you are not at home and cannot supervise their interaction. There is just no reason to risk it. Greyhounds were bred, trained, and employed to chase. It really is amazing that so many can live peacefully with smaller

animals. However, it is best not to take it for granted. Keep them separated when you are not home.

We also recommend that you 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.

A Greyhound that is cat tolerant indoors may not be cat tolerant outside. 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 in the best case, injure it.

Dogs love cat food and unfortunately most also love cat poop. You will need to provide an area that your cat can get to, but your Greyhound cannot. For example, you might add a cat door to a laundry room door and keep the cat's food and litter box in there. Or set up a baby gate that your cat can either slip under or jump over that prevents your Greyhound from entering the area.

You will also want to prevent your cat from investigating the Greyhound's food, especially when he is eating. Your Greyhound might not want to share and could snap at your cat.

## SECTION 5: HOME ACCLIMATION

*Greyhounds are natural athletes. They should always be kept lean. Their bone structure is not designed to carry large amounts of extra weight.*

### Water Intake

At the racetrack, Greyhounds have access to water only when turned out, which is approximately 4 times a day. Therefore, some newly adopted Greyhounds do not know when to quit if water is offered all of the time. To help with housetraining, it may be necessary to regulate your Greyhound's drinking for a period of time. You may want to offer just a sip or 2 before work and before bed. Then offer as much as he wants when you get home from work. Understand that your Greyhound will need to urinate within 30 minutes to an hour after drinking large quantities of water.

### Stair Climbing

Racing Greyhounds have no exposure to life in a home prior to their adoption. One of the things they have to learn about is climbing stairs. If your Greyhound was in a foster home, he may have learned how to do it. If your dog doesn't know how to climb stairs, you'll need to teach him. Some of them are scared at first. Encourage your Greyhound, but do not coddle him. Dogs can read our facial expressions and body postures, so remain calm, reassuring, and upbeat while teaching stair climbing. Don't scold your Greyhound if he is having trouble learning.

Start at the bottom of the staircase by putting your knee behind your Greyhound's rear end. You may need to put his front feet on the first step. Start your walk up the stairs by gently placing the front feet on the next step. Encourage your Greyhound by saying "Come on, let's go." If the dog does not respond, gently push up on the dog's rear with your knee. As the dog's hind quarters start to elevate, place one hind foot

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on the next step. Proceed this way, by moving the front feet and either letting the dog move the hind feet or by doing it for him. When you get to the top, praise your Greyhound in a happy voice. Let him relax for a few minutes.

When you start back down, stand in front of your Greyhound and help him move his feet from step to step. Place your hand on his chest or collar to make sure he does not trip and fall. Praise him 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. Most Greyhounds fly up and down stairs in a short period of time.

### **Mirrors and Glass**

Racing Greyhounds have usually never seen mirrors, large windows, or sliding glass doors. They quickly figure it out, but you will want to be cautious for the first few days. A Greyhound running in from the yard will have no idea that the sliding glass door is closed. Or your Greyhound could see a squirrel from outside a large window and try to run through it. Show your Greyhound each and every window or glass door that could be mistaken as an opening. You should definitely consider placing strips of masking tape on the glass to help identify glass or sliding glass doors for your new Greyhound.

### **Dog Proofing Your House**

Walk around your house in search of things that a dog might find attractive. Prized possessions should be out of reach. Little knick-knacks that could easily be broken or knocked over should be on higher shelves. A dog cannot tell the difference between a stuffy toy and a child's favorite stuffed animal, so anything that resembles dog toys needs to be put away. Food needs to be stored out of reach and counters kept clear. Kitchen and bathroom trash cans, especially, either need to be dog proofed or behind a closed door.

*The absolute, unbreakable rule for Greyhounds is never let your Greyhound off a leash until it is in a fenced area.*

## **SECTION 6: FEEDING YOUR GREYHOUND**

Greyhounds are natural athletes. They should always be kept lean. Their bone structure is not designed to carry large amounts of extra weight. If you run your hand along your Greyhound's side, you should feel the ribs. The last one or two ribs should be visible. The underbelly should tuck up behind the rib cage and in front of the hip showing a distinct waistline. Another rule of thumb is that your Greyhound's weight should not be more than 5 pounds over his racing weight. Many racing Greyhounds maintain their race weight or even lower. This is fine. Muscle weighs more than fat and your Greyhound, most likely, is not going to keep his bulky muscles. Focus on how your Greyhound looks and feels rather than his actual weight.

### **Recommended Dry Foods**

SEGA recommends premium-quality dry dog food, such as Nutro, Eukanuba, Best in Show, California Natural, Canidae, Flint River Ranch, Innova, or the Red Bandanna varieties. If you want to add canned food for taste, use only premium brands, such as those just mentioned. Avoid foods with soy, as they are not highly digestible, and can

cause loose stools. Never feed semi-moist or "burger" imitation types of dog food. They contain lots of sugar, preservatives, and empty calories.

### **B.A.R.F. Diet**

Some Greyhound owners feed a homemade, raw food or B.A.R.F. (Biologically Appropriate Raw Food) diet. Please do your research before doing so. *Natural Nutrition for Dogs and Cats* by Kymthy Schultze, *Give Your Dog a Bone* or *The BARF Diet* by Ian Billinghurst, or *Raw Meaty Bones Promote Health* by Tom Lonsdale are excellent resources to get started. Just a few of the benefits include healthy mouths with clean teeth and gums, little or no "doggy breath," and in general a less frequent need for veterinary teeth cleanings. Stools are significantly smaller and much firmer.

### **Feeding Amounts and Frequency**

You will have to do a little adjusting to find the optimum amount of food to feed your Greyhound. Females normally eat between 2 to 3 cups a day and the average male should eat between 3 and 4 cups a day. Feed according to how your Greyhound looks. If too thin, increase the amount of food. If too fat, decrease the amount, but resist the urge to "fatten up that skinny Greyhound." Do not allow your Greyhound to dictate how much food he should have. Dogs are opportunists and are designed to gorge whenever the opportunity arises. A healthy dog should always be looking for a meal.

Feed your Greyhound twice a day, giving him half the food in the morning and half at night. It is better not to feed him just once a day. Too much food at one time can cause bloat. Moisten the food with a little water, but not too much, if your Greyhound is about to be left alone for the day. We strongly recommend against "free feeding" or always keeping the food bowl full. Free feeding is a sure way to make them fat.

### **Loose Stools and Gas**

If your Greyhound has loose stools, you may try adding plain canned pumpkin (without the spices) to the kibble to help firm up loose stools. As his stools improve, you can lessen the amount of canned pumpkin you feed each day until you no longer need it. Check with your veterinarian if the problems continues long-term.

If your Greyhound has a gas problem, try adding a few spoonfuls of plain yogurt or canned pumpkin (not pie filling) to your dog's food. If that does not help, you may try a different type of food or Prozyme, a digestive supplement for dogs. It is available from KV Vet Supply.

### **Gastric Torsion (Bloat)**

You also need to be aware of the dangers of gastric torsion, commonly known as bloat. All deep chested dogs are susceptible to bloat. Bloat is a rapid build-up of gas in the stomach/chest area and the stomach twists and contorts. A Greyhound suffering from bloat may lie down and gasp for air. He may also pace continuously. His sides may suddenly expand and appear very bloated. **THIS IS A LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCY!** If your dog gets bloat, you have about 30 minutes to get him to the vet for surgery. To help prevent bloat, avoid strenuous exercise, such as hard running, for about 1 hour before and 2 hours after a meal. 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

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slowly. Or place a couple of tennis balls, Kongs, or even a large clean rock (one that cannot be swallowed) in his bowl, so he has to eat around the objects. If your dog eats standing up, we recommend elevating the food dish with a footstool or elevated dog dishes.

## SECTION 7: SAFETY 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 or more. The sight of a small animal, a paper bag, or leaves blowing in the wind can send Greyhounds into a full run at the proverbial 45 mph. They can reach full speed in 2 seconds. When in pursuit of prey, Greyhounds will not respond to verbal commands. In a few minutes, a running Greyhound can be miles from home or worse. He could be dead by the side of the road. Unexpected noises, such as firecrackers, loud cars or trucks, can also startle and panic an unleashed Greyhound. He may take off, become lost, or get killed.

The absolute, unbreakable rule for Greyhounds is **NEVER LET YOUR GREYHOUND OFF A LEASH UNLESS IT IS IN A FENCED AREA**. You may think you've taught your Greyhound to come when called and that you have had him for a number of years that now he can be trusted off leash. That is wrong. Even trainers with Greyhounds that are extensively trained for obedience and/or agility competition take certain precautions when their Greyhounds are performing off lead. Much care is taken in training, practicing, and reinforcing recalls **continuously** for every possible situation that might be encountered. Also consider that Greyhounds performing off lead are focused on their job and less likely to notice their surroundings. Allowing a Greyhound off lead to potty in your front yard is so much more dangerous because he is much more likely to notice the cat across the street. All adoptive families sign a contract with SEGA stipulating, among other things, that they will observe this rule. SEGA reserves the right to reclaim the dog if we find that he is being allowed to run free.

### **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. Never 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, or be stolen. Greyhounds are strictly housedogs 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 with a doghouse.

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.

### **Footpads**

Newly retired racers have soft footpads. Racers have few opportunities to walk on rough surfaces such as blacktop roads. Their pads may blister if walked for long periods of time on asphalt before having a chance to toughen up. Gradually increase the length of your walks.

### **Overhead Runs, Ties, and Flexi-Leads**

Never put a Greyhound on an overhead run or tie her to a stake or tree. Remember, Greyhounds can reach speeds of 45 mph in 2 seconds. If the Greyhound decided to bolt, he will have reached full speed before he reaches the end of the rope. The result could be serious injury, including a broken neck.

You have agreed in your adoption contract that you will not use a Flexi-Lead or other retractable lead with your Greyhound. These types of leads are not safe for Greyhounds because they allow too much line out of the retracting device that can allow your Greyhound to get up speed if he decides he wants to chase something. We have known of Greyhounds having their necks broken under these circumstances, or sustaining broken legs when they took off running and the lead line wrapped around their legs. **DO NOT USE A RETRACTABLE LEASH WITH YOUR GREYHOUND UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE.**

## SECTION 8: CHILDREN AND GREYHOUNDS

Do you have kids? Before you adopt a Greyhound, consider the following:

- Children love to hug dogs. They should be taught not to.
- Dogs and young children should not be left alone together. Even the most tolerant dog cannot stand up to badgering. Kids are kids and dogs are dogs and that's why there are crates. With all the demands on you, you need a place to put the dog when you just can't handle one more thing.
- Children are loud. This can confuse dogs. It's common for dogs to associate loud noises with trouble.
- There are dogs that don't like kids and/or babies. Some dogs are frightened and are fear biters. Some dogs are too aggressive – aggression biters. It is no sin to decide that this dog is better off in another home.

None of the above refers to Greyhounds alone. Each of these is from Brian Kilcommons' book *Child-Proofing your Dog*. They apply to all dogs, all breeds, and all families. Many of the returned Greyhounds in the Southeastern Greyhound Adoption Group are from families with children. "The dog snapped at my child for no reason." There is almost always a reason. You just didn't recognize the signs. Adults can read body language, kids can't. "It is too much work. We weren't prepared." To socialize a former racing Greyhound coming from a track with a strict routine and no child social-

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ization to a home with small children and a busy household is a LOT of work. Are you willing to do what it takes?

There are steps that should be taken to correctly set up the dynamics to introducing a Greyhound to children and a new home. First and extremely important...READ, READ, READ. Without exception *Child-Proofing Your Dog* should be required reading and your reference. Know the signs and be ready to implement any steps to correct a problem before it gets serious. Lee Livingood's book *Retired Racing Greyhounds for Dummies* is also required reading. You are not only adopting an adult dog but a specialized athlete. You need to be able to understand the breed and his background at the track.

This is not just "Child-Proofing Your Dog" 101 but also "Dog-Proofing Your Child." You need training, the children need training, the other parent needs training, and the dog needs training. It is a team effort. Just like in raising children, the dog requires consistency in training. Why should your children obey you and do what you want if at first you say no and then change your mind? They quickly learn that if they can wear down your patience they will eventually get what they want. Dogs know that too. That's how kids get spoiled and that's how dogs get spoiled. A spoiled dog has an attitude problem that you don't need when you have children.

There are guidelines to introducing an ex-racing Greyhound to a home with younger children. If you can commit to following these steps without exception you are up to the challenge:

1. Don't get a Greyhound FOR your child, to grow up with your child, or to teach your child responsibility. This is a family decision and a family dog. It may be your intention to have the Greyhound be your child's dog but your dog will bond first and closest to the person who feeds it, lets him outdoors, generally cares for him, and spends the most time with him. These days kids' schedules often call for the children to be away from home more than the adults, so guess who he will bond with first? The more the child participates with feeding, caring for, and training your dog, the more the dog will respect your child and seek out his attention. But it cannot and in all probability will not be the child's responsibility.
2. Buy a crate and use it for housetraining and a safe place for the dog to be when you are not home or he cannot be supervised. It is absolutely essential for the first few weeks to make sure your new dog is either in a crate or an ex-pen when he cannot be supervised or needs peace and quiet.
3. Most dogs, of any breed, do not like to be hugged or kissed on the face, etc. Many dogs, including Greyhounds, will warm up to this eventually but for the first few months don't let any child, yours or others do this. Most dogs would rather be scratched on the chest. They see a hand coming over the head as threatening, especially from a being their own size and one as active and confident as a child. Let the dog come to you and the child.
4. Don't let your kids or their friends chase your new Greyhound. This includes crowding him or backing him into a situation he feels like he can't escape from. This provokes fear biting. This is also where the crate comes in. His safe place is off limits to everyone. Keep the door of the crate open so he can es-

*To socialize a former racing Greyhound coming from a track with a strict routine and no child socialization to a home with small children and a busy household is a LOT of work – but well worth it!*

cape to it when he needs to and teach all children not to reach into the crate when the dog is in it.

5. Don't let your kids approach the dog while he is eating. If this seems to be a problem, after a few days when it is feeding time and, UNDER SUPERVISION, let your child feed the dog kibble from his hand, flat palm up.
6. EXERCISE! Don't let your child walk your dog alone at first. At first you need to walk him with your child tagging along. You need to get a feel for how well your dog walks on a leash. If he is a puller, there are corrections for this. Of course Greyhounds may take off after any small moving creature. Be prepared with your hand placed through the leash loop. Your child will learn from you how to correctly hold the leash and walk the dog. After you feel confident, let the child put on the leash (don't tolerate jumping up and excitement while attaching the leash, wait until he calms down) and walk the dog under your supervision. When you are comfortable with the situation, the child can walk the dog on his own. Of course this is your call, depending on the child's age and walking situation in your neighborhood. No, Greyhounds don't NEED tons of exercise. They are happy to lie around your house. But, as we like to say, "a tired dog is a happy dog" especially with all the nervousness of being new. A walk is good for everybody...just be aware of those neighborhood kids at first who run up and want to hug your new dog around the neck. Don't let them!
7. Don't spoil the dog. This dog came from having nothing at the track to having everything at your house. How would you react? He is not used to a lot of attention and even if he demands it, don't give it to him. Do not allow him on the furniture. It puts him on an equal level with you and your child. His place, at this time, is on the floor. Not (human) beds, not sofas, etc.
8. Greyhounds are not normally rough and tumble dogs. However, no tug of war games or similar rough housing. Games, such as these, boost the dog's confidence and can lead to dominant behaviors especially towards children.
9. Don't shut him away! This is not a dog to be put in another room. Greyhounds are very social and want to be part of your life. In the beginning when you use a crate or ex-pen put it where you all gather. He may whine at first but it won't be forever and before long he won't have to be in a crate unless you choose. Maybe the crate could be set up in the child's room at night or have the children sleep on the sofa with the crate in the den. The dog won't soil the house in the middle of the night, the child has a job to do with the dog, and they both bond sooner!
10. And, most important, OBEDIENCE TRAIN. Your dog needs a job to do and a way to earn treats. You have to earn his respect and he has to learn to respect you. It is an excellent tool for you and your child in relating to your dog's place in your home. Go to an obedience class with your dog and your child and eventually have the child give the commands. If the dog won't obey the child, have the child stand in front of you (as if you were one person) at first so the dog knows to obey both of you. Don't let him get away with only obeying you. Treat for all good behaviors. If he shows any sign of being overwhelmed, backing up/retreating, confident posturing, or barking at the children by all means

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crate or ex-pen and call us. Never be forceful or let the children be forceful with your dog. It just makes the situation worse.

11. Most people know not to approach a dog sleeping on a bed. It actually goes further than that. Don't allow kids to approach a dog lying down anywhere, period! If he is lying down **even with his head up**, it is his quiet time and he doesn't want to be disturbed. That includes lying on the floor, on the dog bed, next to the dog bed, or even close to him when he is on the floor. Depending on the dog's personality he may eventually tolerate close company, but this would be months from now when you really feel comfortable with him.

If you can commit to these very important first steps you will go a long way to creating a successful and rewarding relationship with your new Greyhound and your family. If you have ANY questions or concerns, please call us. Don't wait...we can help.

## SECTION 9: TRAINING AND OBEDIENCE

A well-trained dog is a joy to live with and a Greyhound is no exception. Greyhounds can be taught to sit, down, stay, and come when called. Some can even complete in agility and obedience. If you choose to train your Greyhound (and we recommend that you do), please find a trainer that uses only positive reinforcement. We do not recommend classes that use choke chains or force. Clicker training is a positive training method that is growing in popularity. An easy way to find a positive training class is to search specifically for a clicker training class. SEGA club member Jennifer Bachelor teaches clicker training classes in the metro Atlanta area. Please contact her for more information at nevergreyhounds@bellsouth.net, 678-494-0956, or visit her website at <http://neversaynevergreyhounds.net/>.

It is especially important to teach your Greyhound to come when called. Although you should never allow your Greyhound off leash, accidents do happen, and Greyhounds occasionally find that they are free. You will probably not be able to stop your Greyhound mid-chase, but you might be able to call your Greyhound back to you if he was just wandering around or had finished chasing.

## SECTION 10: OTHER THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

### **Flea and Tick Control**

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

The chemicals in flea and tick products are no exception, and you must be careful of these products. What is fine for another breed is not fine for a Greyhound. SEGA DOES NOT RECOMMEND THE USE OF ANY FLEA/TICK COLLAR CURRENTLY ON THE MARKET. WE ONLY RECOMMEND THE USE OF TOPICAL FLEA/TICK TREATMENTS.

Flea collars contain chemicals that can go directly into the Greyhound's bloodstream. They can cause severe illness and possibly death.

Advantage and Frontline are topical treatments sold by veterinarians and select retail outlets. They come in small tubes and are applied to the base of the dog's neck once a month. Actually, many Greyhound owners find that both can be reapplied every few months.

Frontline works against fleas and ticks. Advantage works against fleas.

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 organophosphates, such as Chlorpyrifos, Dursban, or Defend, or any flea/tick product containing carbamates such as Carbaryl or Sevin. Never flea-dip your Greyhound. The chemicals in dips are too strong, even when they are pyrethrin-based.

As much as you might love to spray your Greyhound with insect repellent when she is being eaten alive by those nasty mosquitoes, 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, which is diluted with water and made into a spray. This alternative works for people, too.

### **Worming**

Do not purchase over-the-counter worming medication. Please consult your veterinarian if you think your dog has worms. It is best to first test for worms and then treat accordingly.

### **Toxins and Poison Control**

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 chemicals can be fatal to Greyhounds. 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 flags. Some lawn chemicals have been linked to canine cancer. Rinse your Greyhound's feet when you return home from ballfields since you cannot be sure if they have just fertilized. We do not recommend the use of commercially available products that stop the yellowing of grass due to dog urine.

Chocolate can be a deadly poison to dogs, believe it or not. It contains theobromine, which cannot be metabolized by the dog's liver. A 5 oz. bar of baking chocolate can kill a dog. Never give your pet chocolate in any form or quantity. If your dog ingests chocolate in any amount, call your veterinarian or the National Animal Poison Control Center immediately (see below). Also avoid onions. Too many can be toxic.

Never administer human medications to any animal without the explicit advice of a veterinarian. Be sure to ask how much and how often to give a human medication if your vet gives you permission. **Tylenol and ibuprofen products such as Advil or Motrin can be deadly.** The only over-the-counter analgesic that is considered generally safe for dogs is buffered aspirin. However, still get your veterinarian's advice. If your pet

*A well-trained dog is a joy to live with and a Greyhound is no exception.*

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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 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. Many harsh detergents and chemicals are used in house cleaning and home remodeling.

You need to scan all areas of your home, the way you would if you were baby proofing for a toddler. Toilet cleaners like Ty-D-Bowl are poisonous. Make sure you keep the toilet lid down. Watch for chemicals under bathroom vanities. Look out for liquid soaps, shampoos, perfumes, laundry detergents, laxatives, medicines, you name it. Chemicals in the garage are also extremely dangerous. Antifreeze is a deadly poison to animals. As little as one teaspoon of antifreeze will 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.

Most house plants and many common outdoor plants are also toxic to dogs. There are more than 70 different common house and garden plants that will poison your pet. Your vet can supply you with a complete list.

If your dog ingests anything you think may be poisonous, call the National Animal Poison Control Center immediately. **THE NUMBER FOR THE NATIONAL ANIMAL POISON CONTROL CENTER IS 888-426-4435.** Copy this number and place it by your telephone. 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 and charges may apply. It is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

### **Grooming**

Your Grey's ears should be checked weekly and cleaned as needed. Use cotton balls and a mild ear cleaning solution as recommended by your veterinarian. Your vet can also show you the proper way to clean your dog's ears.

Your Greyhound will need to have his nails cut about every two weeks. Your vet or a local groomer such as PetSmart 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. 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 touch the floor can increase the chances of breaking a toe when running in the yard.

You should brush your Greyhound weekly, or more frequently if you wish. Not only does grooming help to keep skin and coats healthy, but it also helps to remove shedding hair that would otherwise end up in your house.

If your Greyhound eats commercial dog food, we recommend that you brush his teeth at least once a week. However, brushing daily is best if you would like to cut down on

bad breath and reduce the need for veterinary teeth cleaning. There are doggie dental care kits that contain a special dog toothbrush and non-foaming, chicken flavored toothpaste. Human toothpaste foams too much and contains ingredients that would harm your dog if swallowed. Greyhounds fed raw food diets, generally, do not need brushing or teeth cleanings.

You do not need to bathe your Greyhound as much as you would other breeds of dogs unless you suffer from allergies. Greyhound need only 1 or 2 baths a year. When you do bathe your Greyhound, use only mild shampoo designed for dogs. If you use a flea shampoo, make sure it does not contain any harmful repellants or chemicals noted earlier. Please note that some Greyhounds will collapse in very warm bath water. Don't worry, he's just super relaxed.

### **Veterinary Care**

SEGA has provided the initial veterinary care for your Greyhound. She has been spayed or he has been neutered. Your dog has had his initial one-year inoculations for rabies, distemper, parvo, and kennel cough (bordetella), has been tested for worms and heartworms, and has been given monthly heartworm preventative while in SEGA's care. Your Greyhound also had its teeth cleaned if necessary. You will be provided your Greyhound's medical record for the period it was with SEGA.

You should arrange to take your new dog to your vet within 2 weeks of bringing him home. If you need a recommendation for a vet near you who is experienced with Greyhounds, SEGA can recommend one to you. There are two purposes for this visit.

The first is to purchase an initial supply of heartworm preventative (such as Heartgard Plus or Interceptor) and flea and tick preventative (such as Frontline). The second reason to take your Greyhound

to a veterinarian within two weeks is for a well visit. The doctor can establish a profile of your dog when he is healthy. You should bring along the veterinary records you received from SEGA.

You and your vet may notice that your Greyhound has one or more of the following marks of racing life. Your dog may have scars. This is common, as Greyhounds have thin skin and may have slammed into another Greyhound during a race and some may be from play prior to his racing career. He may have tattered or torn ears. Your Greyhound may have bald thighs. This is not a skin problem. Possibly due to their diet at the track and being kept in a crate all the time, the hair is rubbed away. If the hair has not grown in within 3 months, he may have a thyroid problem, which is determined with a blood test. It is also possible to have bald thighs and be perfectly healthy. Some Greyhounds will always have bald thighs.

Greyhounds are unusually sensitive to general anesthesia. Special precautions **MUST** be taken with a Greyhound undergoing anesthesia. Greyhound-safe anesthetics are **Telazol** or **Isoflurane**. **Barbiturates should never be used on Greyhounds.** It is best to make sure your vet is aware of this before consenting to any surgery.

Lastly, discuss a vaccination schedule with your veterinarian. Most vet schools and more and more vets now recommend a three-year vaccination schedule rather than annually. Ask your vet for a recommendation. Your Greyhound's current rabies certificate is only good for 1 year, so he will need to receive a rabies vaccination at his an-

*Chocolate can be a deadly poison to dogs, believe it or not.*

nual check up. Ask your vet if he or she recommends the 3-year rabies shot that is now available in most counties in the state of Georgia.

Three months after you get your Greyhound, you should bring a stool sample to the vet. This is to be sure that any initial worming that was done was completely effective. It sometimes takes a second dose of worming medication to completely be rid of worms.

We recommend heartworm preventative such as Heartguard year round and re-testing for heartworms every two years.

### **Post-operative Care**

If you get your Greyhound a few days after he or she was neutered or spayed, you will want to adhere to the following guidelines.

After surgery, your Greyhound may be groggy and may need to go the bathroom more frequently for a few days. You can expect that your Greyhound may vomit the first night from the anesthesia. This is fairly normal, and nothing to worry about. The anesthesia can also cause coughing for a day or two. He will probably feel sore for a few days as well.

On the first night, offer tiny amounts of water. He will be very thirsty, but uncontrolled drinking will make him vomit. Do not offer any food the first night.

Take note as to when your Greyhound was spayed or neutered and be sure to only leash walk if you have adopted within 10 days of his or her surgery. Use a crate to keep him from being too active, as well. Keep him from jumping up or down from a high place such as in and out of an SUV. Instead, pick the dog up by placing one arm behind the rear legs at the knees and the other arm around the front of the Greyhound's chest. Gently lift and place him.

SEGA Greyhounds, generally, have dissolvable sutures and do not need to have sutures removed. Be sure you know for sure which type your Greyhound has. If they need to be removed, have it done 10 to 14 days after surgery. All sutures need to be kept dry, so do not bathe your Greyhound at this time. Check the incision every day for the first week. If it is red and/or inflamed call your veterinarian. Also keep your Greyhound from licking or chewing the incision site. Most leave it alone, but if this happens, use the muzzle and tape the bottom half.

Contact SEGA or Lake City Animal Hospital (770-974-3536) with any questions.

### **Diarrhea**

Diarrhea can be caused by eating something he is not used to, intolerance to a particular ingredient in his dog food, stress, sudden change in diet, giardia, and numerous other reasons.

When your Greyhound has a bout of diarrhea, the first course of action is to withhold all food for 24 hours and to administer a child's dosage of Kaopectate or Imodium AD. Doing so allows his digestive tract to clear out the cause and to rest. After 24 hours, offer your Greyhound 1/2 cup of cooked white rice and 1/2 cup of plain

canned pumpkin **without spices (NOT pie filling)**. Once he has had a normal stool, start to add kibble back into his meals continuing with the canned pumpkin. Each day add more and more kibble and less and less canned pumpkin. After a few days, he should be back to normal. If not, please consult your veterinarian.

### **Human Allergies**

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, microscopic bits of allergen chip off and become airborne. Typically, people are more allergic to heavily undercoated dogs 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 Greyhound 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 without rugs! It will help. If you are stuck with carpet, use a HEPA vacuum cleaner.
5. Bathe your Greyhound once every 2 weeks. Regular bathing of the pet is highly recommended for people with allergies. Also groom your Greyhound twice a week, preferably by a person in the household without allergy problems.
6. Use Hy-Lyt spray bath conditioner for quick coat cleanings when you do not have time to bath. Use baby wipes daily to wipe down your Greyhound and to lift dander.
7. Wash dog bedding weekly.
8. Don't allow your dog up on your furniture.
9. Use an air purifier or ionizer.
10. Keep air conditioner filters clean.
11. If you have outdoor allergies as well, wipe your Greyhound's feet to remove unwanted allergens before coming inside
12. And lastly, have patience! The worst time is usually the first two weeks. Usually after two months even the most severe reactions settle down.

### **Estate Planning for Pets**

In most states in the eyes of the law animals are considered personal property. They are treated the same under the law as an article of jewelry or furniture. If no will ex-

*When you join the Southeastern Greyhound Club, you become part of a large and diverse fellowship of Greyhound owners whose combined knowledge and experience in all things Greyhound is truly unique in this country.*

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ists at the time of your death, 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 put to sleep.

Please make your heirs aware of SEGA's adoption contract provision: **ALL SEGA-PLACED GREYHOUNDS MUST RETURN TO SEGA FOR PLACEMENT.** Please specify that your Greyhound must not be sent to an animal shelter, be given away to someone else, or be euthanized.

## SECTION 11: SOUTHEASTERN GREYHOUND CLUB (SEGC) ACTIVITIES

### Lost Hound Cooperative

The Lost Hound Cooperative is a SEGC benefit that provides a network to assist members in finding their lost Greyhound. Hounds get loose, it is an unfortunate fact of life and it happens to the best and most conscientious Greyhound owners. The lost hound cooperative program provides the following to SEGC members:

- The Lost Hound Cooperative booklet, which contains information on how to keep your Greyhound safe and search procedures if a Greyhound goes missing.
- A sample lost hound poster template available on the SEGC/SEGA Yahoo group/list.
- A refrigerator magnet with the SEGC/SEGA GREYPET phone number as well as three different numbers to reach the lost hound coordinator.
- A document detailing the pros and cons of offering a reward.

A lost hound data sheet that will be used to gather information about the missing Greyhound.

This program is provided by SEGC as a benefit of club membership. Hopefully you never need the assistance of the Lost Hound Cooperative, but please know that we have set up a procedure to help find your Greyhound as quickly as possible if you do.

### Lure Coursing

Lure coursing is a humane sport that re-creates the chase of the hare by the pursuing hound. The "bunny" consists of strips of white plastic attached to a continuous loop line that runs through a series of pulleys to simulate the zigzag path of a rabbit on the run. No wagering is involved – the dogs run for fun and the occasional ribbon or trophy. Lure coursing is not merely a race. Greyhounds and the other participating sighthound breeds are judged not only on *speed*, but also on *enthusiasm* during the course, *agility* in making turns, how accurately they *follow* the path of the lure, and their *endurance* in completing the course.

SEGA's parent organization, the Southeastern Greyhound Club, offers an active program in lure coursing as one of its activities.

There is nothing like watching your mellow hound transformed into a speedster! Greyhounds get very excited at lure coursing events, to say the least. It is breathtaking to see your pet stretch out and fly around the course at 40+ mph.

As with any sport (or even running around in the backyard), coursing does hold some risk of injury to your Greyhound. However, you can greatly decrease the risk of injury by taking some common-sense precautions. First, read the article entitled "How to Get Started in Lure Coursing" which is found at <http://www.greyhoundadoption.org/club/lurecoursing.cfm>.

Second, follow these safety precautions (which are discussed in greater detail in the article):

- Don't run an overweight or out-of-shape Greyhound, or one with racing injuries that make full-out running inadvisable.
- Keep your Greyhound's nails trimmed so that they don't touch the floor when he is standing on a hard surface.
- Feed your Greyhound only half of his normal ration on the morning of the run to avoid the risk of bloat.
- Take the Greyhound on a 10 to 15 minute walk/trot prior to running to warm up and stretch.
- Let your Greyhound watch a few other runs before he runs, and always let him run alone the first two or three times. However, don't let him stand and bark at the other dogs running for long periods of time (more than about 10 minutes), as that can get him overexcited and overheated.
- Your laid-back Greyhound will likely become very excited watching the other dogs run. Keep a good hold on his leash, and don't let him out the full length of the leash. Having him get away from you and running with a leash trailing behind him is very dangerous, for both him and the dogs that are running.
- Wrap the bottom four inches or so of your Greyhound's legs with Vetrap before he runs to protect the legs. An experienced courser will be glad to help you with this.
- After his run, take your Greyhound for a nice leisurely cool-down walk for 10 to 15 minutes. During this time, be aware of any changes in his gait, and check his feet. After his breathing slows down, give him plenty of fresh water.
- On warm or humid days, wet down your Greyhound before and after he runs. Concentrate the wet down on his feet, chest, and inner thighs.
- Bring your crate, water for drinking, and some sort of covering to provide shade.

### Pet Therapy Program

In our pet therapy program, members visit nursing homes and assisted living centers with their Greyhounds to provide the residents with canine companionship and the well-known therapeutic effect that such companionship produces. Please check the SEGC website for the current schedule.

### Meet and Greets

Meet and Greets are an opportunity to educate the public about Greyhounds and to show adoptable Greyhounds. Feel free to come down and show off this wonderful breed. Please check the SEGC website for the current schedule.



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### **Greysitting Exchange**

The Greysitting Exchange is a group of SEGC club members who are willing to pet sit your Greyhound(s) while you are away from home. This could be for a day, overnight, a weekend or for a vacation. Any member of SEGC may use the exchange. For more information on this great program visit the SEGC website.

### **Club Meetings**

Club meetings are held on the third Wednesday of every month. It is a great place to meet and have dinner with other Greyhound owners. Please check the SEGC website for the location.

### **SEGC Yahoo Group List**

SEGC also has a discussion list that is part of Yahoo groups. As an adopter, you will receive an email invitation to join the list after the adoption of your Greyhound. If you accept the invitation, you will be placed on the list for a one-year period. After that, you may remain on the list by joining SEGC. The list is a great place to ask general questions and stay abreast of events, issues, and volunteer needs.

### **Competitive Agility and Obedience**

A few club members train and compete their retired racers in obedience and agility. The best way to get started is to enroll your Greyhound into a training class. Please check out <http://neversaynevergreyhounds.net> for more information.

### **Hound Hikers**

SEGC has implemented a Hound Hikers program which meets on a monthly basis on the second Saturday of each month for a group walk/hike with our hounds. For each of our excursions, please provide plenty of water, snacks, and poop bags for your pups. There are locations for water refills, bathrooms, and waste bins. We hope you and your hound will join us for some exercise and fun! Please check the SEGC website for the current schedule.

### **Running Mates**

Running Mates is a program designed to provide new adopters with an experienced Greyhound owner for post-adoption support and create a “friendly face” for new adopters that will welcome new Greyhound owners to many of the benefits and events SEGC offers, reach out to their Running Mate to invite them to events and meetings, look for their Running Mate at events to introduce them to other SEGC/SEGA individuals to help build and support club camaraderie. For more information on this great program visit the SEGC website. If you do not hear from a Running Mate within 3 days of your adoption, please contact Patty Winters and Suzanne Lipson at [runningmate@greyhoundadoption.org](mailto:runningmate@greyhoundadoption.org).

**What are you waiting for?**

**Fill out an adoption application today!**

**[www.greyhoundadoption.org](http://www.greyhoundadoption.org)**