



## The First Week

*When you bring a new greyhound into your home be aware of these anxiety triggers and give them time to adapt:*

**Novelty** - Everything is new to them, new household items, new people, new animals, and maybe the first time as an only dog.

**Invasion of personal space** - disruption when resting, hugging, kissing, forcibly restraining. You want to love your dog but give them space to avoid stressing them out.

**Changes in housing** - moving from a kennel or farm to a foster home, then to a new adoptive home.

**Changes in household members** - a new foster family, then adoptive family, possibly kids and new pets in the household to adjust to.

**Separation from human family and dog family** - losing their trainer/caretakers and their littermates/kennelmates, losing their foster family, and losing you when you leave for work.

**Changes in routine** - new feeding schedule, new potty break schedule, new house rules, and often more time out of the crate than he is comfortable with.

**Physical stress** - possible recent spay/neuter surgery, or vaccinations or deworming.

**Lack of outlets for normal breed behaviors** - after training and racing for months or years, they are suddenly retired and no longer able to do what they love and

were bred for, chasing a lure. No matter your opinion of racing, your greyhound loved the chase. Greyhounds will chase to the point of heat exhaustion and even death if we don't stop them. This is one reason they can never be trusted off leash outside a fenced area. Even a large dog park can be too large in hot, humid weather. Remember, greyhounds are genetically independent thinkers, love the chase, and do not recall. If you choose to do greyhound play groups, lure coursing or amateur race meets, exercise and condition your dog, otherwise they can injure or overheat themselves, possibly very seriously.

### **How to do those first days at home**

Keep the first few days as simple and stress free as possible for your new greyhound.

Only introduce them to your immediate family members. You will have time to invite friends later. Give your new dog a chance to adjust to their new home and family. You're tempted to lavish them with attention, but it is actually better if you can almost ignore them for the first few days. Give them plenty of down time and don't encourage excitement. Dogs respond best to calm, laid back owners. Don't allow family members to force unwanted attention on a new dog. Supervision is important; watch the dog's body language. Too much affection can be overwhelming and unwanted. You want your greyhound to feel the need to seek you out to get affection rather than feel that you are a stalker.

### **Use the crate**

Most greyhounds feel safer and more comfortable in a crate, something familiar, than they do loose in a strange house. A crate is also essential for potty training. Many dogs will only lie down and really relax in a crate at first so give them plenty of crate time to rest and sleep. Use the crate when you go away and if the dog is overwhelmed by too many new distractions and situations in the new home. You can give them a stuffed toy, a Kong toy filled with peanut butter, or a t-shirt that you've worn but not washed. Your scent may help the dog bond to you and help calm them when you're away. Remember to stay in the dog's sight at first when crating so he doesn't feel abandoned. They are used to being crated but not used to being alone in your home yet.

## **No option about going in the crate**

The new crate is not the old crate so your greyhound may not want to go in at first. Bribe them with treats, cheese, peanut butter Kong, anything to entice them in. If they still won't go, push them in. They know that they previously had no option about crating. There was no such thing as a greyhound that "wouldn't crate". Just as it would be unsafe to run around a kennel loose, allowing too much freedom too early is dangerous in your home. They could get into something dangerous while you are gone and their potty training will be more difficult. Most importantly, allowing them to refuse to go in the crate teaches them that being stubborn or throwing fits keeps them from having to do things they don't want to do.

## **Use your dog's muzzle- you get one with your dog**

Greyhounds always had their muzzles on to go out for turnouts, males together, and females together. They are used to wearing them and likely associate them with fun times outside. Don't feel bad about using the muzzle. It is your insurance policy that keeps your pets, other pets, and the greyhound himself safer. The muzzle can also be used instead of the "cone of shame" that vets use to prevent licking or chewing stitches. Add duct tape to the bottom half of the muzzle so they can't lick through the holes.

For those families with small children, small dogs or cats, in the beginning when you are unsure about how the dog may react, use the muzzle while they are adapting to their new housemates. This is important in those first days/weeks, depending on your dog's reaction. Remember, your greyhound's job has been to chase small furry things, even if unreal, until retirement. Even greyhounds that seem small animal safe need time to adjust to seeing fast movements around them without chasing. Outdoors, the new greyhound should be muzzled and leashed in the beginning with a small dog and especially with a cat. *Anything is fair game outside.*

## **Martingale collar and ID tags**

You will have picked out a martingale collar and it will have the GPA-WI tags on it.

This modified choke collar is required for greyhounds when outside a fenced area. The greyhound's head is smaller or the same size as their neck so they can slip out of a standard buckle collar easily if they become afraid and struggle to get free. We don't want a loose and lost greyhound and the martingale collar helps keep them more secure.

You may choose to use an ID collar with all your ID tags on your dog all the time and have separate martingale collars for leash walks. Besides the GPA-WI and microchip tags, you should get one with your own contact information as soon as possible.

### **Child-Dog Safety Suggestions**

If you have children under 10 years old in your home, work with your greyhound from the beginning to help them understand that these small humans are "above" them in the pack structure. Here are some suggestions.

1. Whenever the dog and child go through a door, hold the dog back by the collar so the child goes first. This also teaches respectful behavior, basic discipline.
2. Have the child call the dog to him/her, pet the dog and give the dog a treat.
3. Don't allow the dog to "own" space. Dog beds, human beds and couches belong to humans who allow the dog to use them. That privilege is lost if there is any growling or fussing at any family members.
4. Have the child feed the dog. An adult can prepare the food and then an adult should hold the dog by the collar while the child puts the food in the dog's crate. The child steps away and the adult releases the dog saying "OK" or whatever. This teaches the dog that good things come from the child and that the child "owns" the food and is sharing it. It also teaches the dog to wait for permission, a good discipline. NEVER let a child approach a dog that is eating or chewing on a treat.
5. As exciting as the new dog is, don't let the child follow the dog around and give it unwanted affection. Hugging, kissing and looking into the dog's eyes can be misinterpreted by the dog as aggression on the part of the child. So don't do this with a new dog. Teach the child to give the dog its space. If

the dog walks away from the child it should not be followed. You want the dog to avoid the child when it has had enough rather than growl or snap. Make sure the child knows to let the dog walk away. Teach your child NEVER to touch the dog that is lying down or sleeping. "Let sleeping dogs lie" is great advice. Most conflict between children and dogs is the result of ignoring this saying.

6. SUPERVISE! SUPERVISE! SUPERVISE! Most trouble between children and dogs happens when not supervised and the dog never gets to tell his side of the story.

### **Feed twice a day and add moisture**

It's best to feed the brand same brand of food the foster home was feeding and make kibble changes gradually, starting with 1/4 new to 3/4 old, increasing the new slowly over several days. The foster home will tell you amounts being fed also. In general, males get about 2 cups kibble twice/day and females get 1-1/2 cups twice/day. Adding a tablespoon or two of Greek nonfat plain yogurt, or canned dog food, or cooked chicken or hamburger (all fat drained off), or pumpkin, or any combination of these, will aid digestion and help create firmer stools. If you add these, cut back on the kibble a little. Greyhounds growing up and racing ate approximately 80% raw meat and 20% kibble and supplements. They never ate dry kibble so this drastic change in diet often causes varying degrees of diarrhea. Adding healthy moisture in the beginning helps their digestive tract adjust. You can gradually remove moisture if you choose to feed dry kibble. Never free feed and do not feed too large a meal at one time. That will give your greyhound diarrhea. Greyhounds have a short digestive tract and can't handle too much food at once. A couple good supplements to add are Omega 3 Fatty Acids (fish oil) and glucosamine, chondroitin and MSM joint supplements. Your greyhound should have the last couple ribs visible. A fat greyhound is unhealthier and more prone to injury than one in good weight.

Be sure your greyhound knows where their water is and see them drink. Dehydration is extremely dangerous. If they don't drink from his water bowl, put water in his crate in the beginning.

## **Give your dog frequent outside potty breaks**

Watch the new dog closely in the house to prevent accidents. A recommendation is to leash the dog to you for the first few days anytime they're out of the crate. If they start to go, you can correct and get them outside immediately. Every accident is a learning experience. If you closely supervise, they never have the chance to begin eliminating in the house. Graduate to having the dog in the room with you and close doors to other rooms or use baby gates so you can always see them. Take them out often to help them develop the habit of going outside right from the start. Also, take them out immediately when they get up if they have been sleeping for a while. At the track, when they come out of their crate they go straight outside to potty. Your greyhound will expect that, even if they have only been crated for a short time. Greyhounds were used to going out on a schedule with the group. They don't really know how "to ask to go out" when they have to relieve themselves. Watch for signals like sniffing, walking quickly or circling. Most greyhounds learn to go out to potty pretty quickly if you are observant and stick to a schedule right from the beginning.

## **Bathe or not**

Your greyhound will have gotten a bath before they left the kennel. They do not need baths often but if you want to give your greyhound a bath, there is a unique characteristic that many do. In warm water some of them relax so much that they fall down and appear to faint. Be ready to support them and cool down the water. They will be fine once cooled. This is normal and is not a medical problem with your dog.

## **Things to do soon**

Find a vet that is familiar with greyhounds. Your adoption rep and our website can help. As you've learned, greyhounds are more sensitive to anesthesia, have a larger heart, different blood values, and other differences from other breeds of dogs.

Make a vet appointment so you can get a prescription for continued heartworm and flea and tick medication. We give a one-month supply and recommend Simparica Trio, a combination heartworm, intestinal worm and flea/tick oral medication all in one. This is the only heartworm med that will work against the possible drug resistant hookworm that greyhounds have had for the last few years.

Get an identity tag for your dog's collar with your dog's name, your name, address and cell phone number.

Not immediately, find a suitable kennel or pet sitter for when you need to be away from home for one or more days. Consider how dogs are turned out at a kennel, in groups or alone. Have your greyhound visit a pet sitter's home before having to leave them there. Be sure you're satisfied with any dog interactions your dog would have to do before leaving them.

### **Take a basic dog obedience class**

Not immediately, but this is a very good idea to help you bond with your new greyhound. It helps your new dog learn to trust you and look to you for instructions.

### **Down the road**

Consider becoming involved as a volunteer for GPA-Wisconsin, whatever your personal skills and interests. There are dog walkers/caretakers at the kennel, meet and greet, fun get-togethers, fund raising efforts, computer/internet support, and dog transport tasks. There are lots of needs in a volunteer organization.