



## **Blue Ridge Greyhound Adoption: Home Visit Discussion**

### **Feeding your greyhound**

- Greyhounds should weigh about 3-5 lbs more than their racing weight. You should be able to feel all ribs and see the last two. Typically start with 2 cups of food per meal with two meals per day. Raise or lower the amount of food depending on weight gain.
- Try a food for 2-3 weeks. If it doesn't agree with them (gas or diarrhea) try a different food.
- In terms of bones, never feed pigs ears or cooked bones as the pieces that break off can be sharp and hurt their digestive tract.

### **Preparing your home**

- Greyhounds typically like soft squeaky toys. Don't overwhelm them with lots of toys at first, but buying a soft toy, a rope toy, a ball and a kong may be a good start.
- Having a dog bed in each room you typically hang out in will give the greyhound a place to be.

### **Health and Care**

- Take your hound to the vet in the first week or two. Bring your paperwork so they can document vaccinations. Discuss heartworm pills and flea/tick preventative options. Lyme disease is no joke in VA/DC/MD and dogs can die from it. Never use a flea collar as many greyhounds cannot tolerate those chemicals.
- Your dog will probably have hookworms. They live in the soil in Florida and Alabama. Monthly worming pills only prevent new worms but cannot treat once worms are in the dog's system. Bring a fecal sample to vet to get tested. Do not accept that one round of treatment will kill the worms. Treatment only kills live worms, but eggs will hatch again in 3-4 weeks. Continue to bring samples in until you receive the all clear from the vet. Be diligent about picking up poop as the dog can re-infect itself and humans can get hookworm too.
- Greyhounds have different blood values (you will get a card in your info packet) and are allergic to certain anesthesia. Discuss with your vet if they understand these things. If they seem dismissive or give you the "we treat all dog breeds" line, find another vet. We have many that we recommend and will give you info in your adoption packet.
- Regular maintenance and care includes cleaning ears, brushing teeth and trimming nails. Dremel offers a cordless pet nail grinder - Dremel 7300-PT 4.8V Pet Nail Grooming Tool

### **The first few weeks**

- High value treats can be used to give rewards for new, scary or unpleasant situations. Nail trimming, learning stairs etc. American made all beef hot dogs and plain boiled chicken are great options.
- Greyhounds are kennel-trained. They will not potty in their kennel. Teach them that your house is their kennel. For the first few days, take them out often during the day to establish that outside is the place to potty. If you have more than a few accidents or it persists, you should consider taking the dog to the vet for a potential UTI.
- Even if you want to allow dogs on furniture or beds, it's recommended that you wait a few weeks to months. Establishing that you are the alpha dog

- Greyhounds don't know stairs. You will need to work with them over the first few weeks to teach them how to go up and down. High value treats can be a great motivator.
- Some greyhounds are initially scared of shiny floors. Adding runner rugs (or put down towels) on wood or shiny tile floors may help the transition.

### **Exercise Limitations**

- Bloat is a problem in deep chested dogs. Their stomach can twist when exercising too close to eating and it is highly fatal. As a general rule, no hard exercise an hour before and an hour after eating to reduce chances of bloat. A casual walk so the dog can relieve itself is OK.
- Greyhounds are sprinters not long distance runners. If you want your hound to be your running buddy, you will need to work them up to longer distances. Their feet pads are quite soft from running on dirt and sand and will need time to build up calluses as well as the lung capacity to do long runs.
- Greyhounds can easily overheat. Some will not have the self control to stop before reaching dangerous heat stroke conditions. Check the color and temperature of the ears. If the ears are bright red and they are breathing very heavy, apply cold compresses to the neck and belly to cool the dog down. When racing, your dog was given a cooling spa bath after each race to both cool down the body temperature and massage the muscles.

### **Sleep and Space Aggression**

- Sleep aggression/sleep startle can happen with greyhounds. They sleep very deep and when awakened, are startled and can nip/lash out. It can be as mild as a growl or can be as serious as a full bite. You will need to feel out your dog to see if they have sleep aggression.
- Space aggression occurs when people get in the dog's space, especially when they are lying on a dog bed or in their crate. They perceive your presence as a threat and that they cannot escape and may lash out, growl or bite.

### **Collars and Leashes and Coats**

- Never use a retractable leash and never tie the dog outside. Greyhounds can accelerate very quickly and will injury their necks if allowed to have more than the standard 6 foot leash length.
- Never let the dog off leash unless in a fenced area.
- Martingale collars or harnesses can be used for walking. Greyhound heads are smaller than their necks so they need the Martingale collar which is a limited choke collar to tighten as it slides up the head. You can have a separate regular collar for ID tags or attach to the flat metal attachments on the martingale. Never attach tags to the D-ring of the Martingale. Tags could get caught and tighten.
- Never attach tags to D-ring. Attach to part that cannot tighten in case they get caught.
- Never use a choke collar or chain collar on your greyhound. Their necks are more sensitive than other breeds of dogs.
- Greyhounds needs coats in winter. General rule, they need one if you need one. A light fleece and a heavier winter coat will do. A snood (scarf/earwarmer) can be used in very cold temperatures. The coat is mostly used for longer excursions and walks, not just to potty. You will get to know when your dog needs it.