

# **Queen City Greyhounds**

## **Foster Manual:**

**A guide to your responsibilities as a foster family.**

*To My Foster Dog*  
by Diane Morgan

**I am the bridge  
Between what was and what can be  
I am the pathway to a new life**

**I am made of mush  
Because my heart melted  
When I first saw you**

**For one little time you are mine  
I will feed you with my own hand,  
I will love you with my whole heart  
I will make you whole**

**I am made of steel  
Because when the time comes  
When you are well and sleek,  
When your eyes shine,  
And your tail wags with joy,  
Then comes the hardest part  
I will let you go –  
Not without a tear,  
But without regret.  
For you are safe forever.  
A new dog needs me now**

## **Welcome and thank you for participating in our greyhound foster program!**

*Families who will open their homes to a new dog and provide training and socialization are the heart and soul of our program and crucial to the adoption process. We will support you in every way we can to make your fostering experience a rewarding one.*

*As a foster family, you are a representative of our organization. Our focus is on greyhounds as pets. It is a Queen City Greyhounds policy to remain neutral and not take a stand one way or another on the greyhound racing industry. Please remember this when you are introducing your foster dog to the public.*

*We hope you will read this manual with an eye toward continuing to improve our Foster Program and the sharing of ideas and knowledge. Many of you will already know much of this material, but these guidelines are developed and re-evaluated periodically to ensure that every aspect of fostering goes as smoothly as possible, both for you and your foster dog. Please feel free to make suggestions that you think would help other foster families.*

*Again, thank you for participating in our foster program. We hope that you enjoy teaching your foster how to retire to a life as a loveable, loyal, well-behaved family pet.*

## **What is fostering?**

An ex-racing greyhound enters your life for a few weeks – usually 4 -6 weeks – although some dogs have been in foster care for longer or shorter periods of time. Some never leave. The foster family falls in love with and then adopts the dog.

### **As a foster parent, you are responsible for teaching you foster greyhound:**

- Housebreaking
- Walking on a leash
- Responding to his / her name
- Appropriate behaviors indoors and out
- Playing with children and adults

Your foster must be kept indoors as a house pet. Greyhounds have no fur or body fat to shield them from temperatures. They have always been kept indoors in temperature-controlled kennels and are accustomed to being inside around people.

### **Remember: We are only a phone call away if you have questions or need advice.**

- Foster Coordinator: Helen Johnson (513) 673-9025**
- Adoption Coordinator: Paul Beaird (513) 772-1334**
- QCG President: Tom Hawver (513) 332-1234**

## **Basic Program Guidelines**

### **Ownership of the foster greyhound**

All foster greyhounds are the sole property of QCG and shall be returned to QCG upon request or if the foster parent is not able to adequately care for the greyhound.

### **Care of the foster greyhound**

Foster parents must provide the foster greyhound:

- High quality dry kibble
- Fresh water
- Trimmed nails
- Coat brushing
- Teeth brushing
- Periodic bathing
- Love and affection
- Soft and comfy beds and pillows
- LOTS of guidance, supervision, and training

### **Health treatment**

QCG will provide routine and emergency veterinary care through select veterinarians. Foster greyhounds are not to be treated by unauthorized veterinarians, except in cases of emergency. Expenses resulting from unauthorized routine care will be the responsibility of the foster parent. You must contact the foster coordinator, adoption coordinator, or president for authorization.

**The designated veterinary practice for QCG is:** Dr. Roberto Legorreta Woodridge Veterinary Hospital, Fairfield, OH 45014 (513) 874-7077

### **Help with placement process**

Foster parents play an important role in the placement and adoption process and may be asked to be available to talk to and meet with the prospective families. You are also encouraged to bring your dog to any and as many events as possible. The more your dog is out, the more likely they are to be adopted!

### **ID Tags**

Make sure your foster wears his greyhound collar and QCG tag at all times. You might also have a tag made that says QCG FOSTER along with your own address and phone number. If your foster dog gets loose, it will have double protection with QCG tag and your tag.

### **Greyhound Names**

You may call your foster greyhound any nickname you like while you're fostering. However, when you are in official situations (i.e. – visiting the vet), please use the greyhound's registered name. A foster dog with the wrong name creates problems for those who keep the official records.

### **Attending Functions**

Foster families are encouraged to attend any and all greyhound functions with their foster dogs. The greyhounds that have been adopted and are now pets make great representatives of the breed, and the foster dogs give a prospective family the opportunity to actually begin picturing themselves with their very own greyhound.

### **Vacationing and Out-of-Town Travel**

In the event you have to travel out of town or have a vacation scheduled, please contact the QCG foster coordinator as early as possible and advise him/her of your plans. You can make arrangements with the foster coordinator or another foster/adoptive family to keep your foster while you are away.

### **Veterinary & Medical Procedures**

#### **Vaccinations and worming**

All greyhounds receive routine vaccinations (DHLPP, Corona, Bordatella, & Rabies) and an initial worming before being placed in a foster home.

#### **Spay/Neuter/Dental**

Before entering foster care, the greyhounds will have the following completed:

- Spay/Neuter
- Teeth cleaning
- Heartworm test
- Any other medical procedures deemed necessary

#### **Giving Medications**

The foster family will, when necessary, administer medication and follow veterinary instructions regarding the recovery and care of the foster greyhound. For example, you may need to administer additional rounds of worming medicine to the greyhound. Instructions and medicine will be given to you.

## **Medications**

For those of you who are new, QCG buys the more frequently used medications in bulk. We will provide heartworm and Frontline, if needed. Our vet with the foster coordinator handles most other medications. If you have questions, please contact the foster coordinator.

## **Participating Vets**

Arrangements for medical care are made by the foster coordinator, adoption coordinator, or president and are scheduled with the participating veterinarian who provides services at a reduced or no cost. Since we are a non-profit organization, we are not in a position to reimburse foster families for routine medical care provided by their personal vet if that care could have been provided by our vet.

## **Routine Veterinary Care**

The foster coordinator or president is responsible for arranging the routine vet appointments. Please call either of them if your foster dog is vomiting, having diarrhea, bleeding, limping, refusing to eat or drink, having seizures, or in any way seems sick. They will immediately schedule an appointment with the appropriate vet.

## **Emergencies**

In the event of an emergency, get vet care immediately, with the dog's health and safety being first and foremost. If the dog can be transported to the participating vet without endangering its life or health, please do so. If this is not possible, obtain care by the best means available. If anesthesia is required, be sure the vet is familiar with greyhounds and anesthesia. Notify the QCG foster coordinator of emergencies as soon as possible.

With this in mind, please follow these procedures:

- ❑ Be patient and polite to everyone you encounter. If we in any way seem ungrateful, rude, or impatient, the hospital could decide to terminate the service it provides. We can't afford to do this to our dogs.
- ❑ Any pertinent information specific to your foster dog can be obtained through the foster coordinator so that the vet will be sure of vaccinations and date given, procedures, desired, and medical conditions previously noted.
- ❑ If you are dissatisfied with any treatment or situation that arises while you are visiting a vet, please remember that, in this situation, you are a representative of QCG. What you do or say reflects directly on QCG. Please do not argue or make a scene. Instead, call the foster coordinator as soon as possible and explain the situation. As the coordinator and liaison to the vet, this person is best qualified to deal with any situation that may arise.

## **Food, Care, and Training**

### **Water and Food**

Provide access to fresh, clean water at all times. Feed a high quality, all natural kibble with no preservatives or dye with a protein level of 20 – 22%. Your foster dog, fresh off the track, may be used to eating raw meat. You may need to mix canned food with the kibble until the dog gets used to eating dry kibble.

### Never Feed:

- ❑ Raw meat – it may contain salmonella
- ❑ Food that could be spoiled. Discard old food. We recommend establishing feeding times twice a day and sticking to that schedule. If your foster dog does not finish in 10 – 15 minutes, it's best to pick up the food and discard it and try again at the next feeding. Your foster will soon realize that feeding time is the time to eat and you will not promote free-feeding habits that are hard to break. Leaving food out, especially moist food, can promote the growth of bacteria and lead to stomach upset and diarrhea. Wash you dog's food bowls thoroughly at least daily.
- ❑ Chicken bones, pork bones, or fish bones – these can be swallowed and their sharp ends can pierce the stomach or intestinal walls
- ❑ Any bone that could be splintered or swallowed whole
- ❑ Chocolate – contains theobromine, which is poisonous to dogs
- ❑ Supplements – unless prescribed by our vet
- ❑ Alcohol – thirsty dogs can drink fatal amounts quickly.

### Tapeworms

If you see little white worms in the dog's stool or around its rectum, it is most likely tapeworms. They are not contagious and cannot be passed from one dog to another. They can only be contracted if the dog swallowed an infected flea or eats raw meat. **IF YOU SEE TAPEWORMS, YOUR DOG HAS FLEAS.** Call the foster coordinator to get a de-wormer for your dog.

### Feeding Time

When feeding your foster dog, never do so close to your own pets. They may be protective of their food bowls. Instead, feed your foster dog in a separate room or at a different time; regardless, **SUPERVISE!** Reinforce the pack order at feeding time: the top (alpha) dog should be fed first, then the second, etc. Your foster's crate may be a handy place to feed it as it creates a good feeling about their crate and prevents competition over food.

### General Care and Grooming

Check your foster dog frequently for cuts, scrapes, fleas, and ticks. Talk with the foster coordinator for appropriate treatment. **DO NOT EVER USE FLEA COLLARS!**

Groom periodically with a grooming mitt or glove, as most dogs fresh from the track have never had much grooming or bathing. They will probably shed a little and enjoy the attention very much. If you have your foster dog for any length of time, they may need a bath. If you cannot adequately administer a bath to the greyhound, please let the foster coordinator know and other arrangements will be made.

Introduce your greyhound to teeth brushing. Teeth brushing is important and you will need to ease your foster into this technique. Initially let the foster greyhound sniff the tube of toothpaste. Then with time, let him/her lick the paste and eventually rub the paste over the gums with your finger. When the time is right, and you will know, transition from your finger to using a brush and gently brush the greyhound's teeth.

Nail trimming is also part of general care. Trim your foster's nails as you would your own.

### Housebreaking

Greyhounds come from the track crate-trained and the transition to houstraining is usually accomplished in a day or two.

- ❑ When you are at home, keep the dog with you on a leash so that you can catch him/her in the act of having an accident. Correct the dog with a firm “NO” and take him/her outside. Praise the dog profusely when they use the potty outside.
- ❑ When you are not home, your foster should be crated or baby-gated in a confined area.
- ❑ Never correct a dog if you didn’t catch him/her in the act. Dogs aren’t able to connect your correction with an action that took place five minutes ago.
- ❑ Do not allow the dog to have free run of the house until you are sure that s/he is completely housebroken.

### **Walks**

Take your foster dog for walks and teach him/her to stroll calmly on a leash. The exercise is good for both of you! For dogs that pull excessively, use a gentle leader or harness. Call the foster coordinator if you need a gentle leader or harness.

### **Play**

Teach your foster greyhound to play. This is something s/he has probably never done. Greyhounds love soft stuffed animals, especially if they squeak!

Outdoors, greyhounds can work up a fairly good speed, even in a small yard. Look for small stumps or pipes that could break or dislocate a toe, or bushes with sharp thorns or broken branches at greyhound eye level. Also, check for poisonous plants. Some of the more deadly plants are:

- ❑ Yew
- ❑ Mistletoe
- ❑ English Holly Berry
- ❑ Philodendron
- ❑ Jerusalem Cherry
- ❑ Azaleas
- ❑ Rhododendron
- ❑ Foxglove
- ❑ Water hemlock
- ❑ Milk weed
- ❑ Jimson Weed
- ❑ Oleander

NOTE: If you have a pool, be aware that although dogs are natural swimmers, they cannot pull themselves up out of the pool and may get stressed and drown.

### **Furniture**

Please DO NOT allow your foster dog on any human furniture in your home, including sofa, love seat, chair, bed. It’s much easier to train your foster dog to not get on furniture than it could be for the adoptive family to break an already established pattern.

### **Let Sleeping Dogs Lie**

This disturbing phenomenon is fairly common in dogs of all breeds, but it is more pronounced in retired racing greyhounds due to the environment in which they have been kept during their racing careers. The saying, “Let sleeping dogs lie”, must have originated from a source with personal experience in this area!

A dog that growls or bites upon being disturbed while sleeping is not generally considered to be an aggressive or vicious dog. These dogs are usually well-adjusted, sociable, affectionate dogs in all other aspects of their ability to relate to people and other pets. Reacting negatively to sleep disturbance is not at all uncommon, even in human beings.

A specific place for the greyhound should be designated with a soft bed, on a blanket on the floor, or in a crate with door left open, but **NOT ON HUMAN FURNITURE**. Everyone should understand that this specific place is off limits for all but the dog. Teaching children this rule should be no different from teaching them anything else that is necessary for you to protect them from things that may injure them. Some greyhounds sleep with their eyes open or partially opened. Please observe your foster dog's sleeping behaviors and communicate any sleep startle to the Foster Coordinator. If you must wake your foster dog, call its name firmly and have it walk to you.

### **DO NOT LET YOUR CHILDREN CRAWL UP TO, RUN UP TO, JUMP ON, KISS, OR HUG A DOG THAT IS LYING DOWN OR SLEEPING!**

Greyhounds do not understand the meaning of children rushing, crawling, running up to it or trying to kiss or hug it when it is laying down (even if the greyhound is awake!) A dog may choose to get up and walk away, do nothing, growl, or it may even snap or bite.

## **YOUR FOSTER DOG AND OTHER ANIMALS**

### **Socialization**

SUPERVISION is key. Socialize your foster dog with your own greyhounds or other dogs, cats, and children. Remember, your foster dog has been a commodity, a racing machine, thus far in its life. Your mission is to show this dog how to relax and be a good family pet for the rest of its life.

### **Getting Acquainted**

Take precautions while you are getting to know the dog's personality, especially when s/he is around other animals and children. Introduce them slowly. NEVER leave the foster dog alone with cats, small pets, or other dogs that have behaved aggressively or dominantly. You will be supplied with a muzzle for your foster greyhound, USE IT! For at least the first week, use the muzzle when making introductions or when the dogs and / or cats are together. Do not leave dogs together unsupervised and un-muzzled!

### **Introducing the foster dog to your dogs**

Introduce the foster greyhound to your dog(s) on neutral territory; for example, introduce them on the sidewalk in front of your house or down the block. Always keep the foster dog on a short leash close to your side. Make sure your foster dog has his/her muzzle on! Bring out your dogs on leashes, one at a time. Do not let them rush the new dog. Observe the reaction of the new dog and of your own dogs. Watch for any signs of aggression and/or dominance. Some of these may include:

- Head and tail held high, stiff, and rigid
- Tail held high and wagging stiffly
- Raised hair along the spine from the shoulder to the tail
- Growling or snapping of teeth
- One dog attempting to mount the other
- Immediately correct any show of aggression with a very firm "NO!"

With leashes still on, let them sniff and greet each other, then take them around the yard and into the house. If all dogs are behaving well with each other, you may remove leashes, but continue to monitor and supervise. Do not leave dogs alone and unattended until you are certain that all are getting along well.

### **Introducing the foster dog to your cats**

Introduce the greyhound to your cat indoors with the greyhound muzzled and leashed. Hold the leash tightly in your hand. Leave the cat on the floor and walk towards the cat slowly. Should the foster greyhound pull or lunge, give a sharp pull on the leash and correct with a very firm “NO!” Keep the greyhound on a leash for the first few days when the cat is present. Correct the dog every time it shows interest in the cat. A spray bottle filled with water is very helpful. If you observe any of the following signs, please inform the foster coordinator:

- ❑ Teeth clicking or snapping with ears alert
- ❑ Fixed gaze or start that cannot be broken
- ❑ Trembling or lurching

### **Behavior towards small animals**

NEVER allow the foster greyhound to run and play with small dogs and cats – indoors or outdoors. Play can turn to hunt in a flash and no cat or small dog is fast enough to get out of the way of a determined greyhound. Muzzle when necessary.

### **Possessive behavior**

The foster dog may be possessive of food, toys, and space in the beginning. Your own dogs may begin to exhibit these same possessive behaviors. Do not leave the dogs unsupervised with food, rawhides, toys, etc. Correct all possessive behavior.

### **Leaving pets home alone**

Before you leave home, separate the foster greyhound from other animals by crating them or baby-gating them into a separate area. **DO NOT CLOSE A GREYHOUND INTO A BATHROOM OR BEDROOM.** A crate or baby gate may be supplied by QCG, if needed, for your use. **As the foster parent, the decision to crate or not is yours to make.**

We advise that you work with your greyhound on being left alone. Begin with leaving them for 10 – 15 minutes. There is no need to make a big deal about leaving – put the greyhound in the crate or in the room with the baby gate. Make sure dog has access to a bed, squeaky toys, rawhides, and water. Return and act as you would when you return home to see your own pets. Repeat this process over several days increasing the alone times by 10 – 15 minutes each instance. If your foster greyhound is showing extreme separation anxiety or crate anxiety, please contact the foster coordinator.

### **Injuries to your family members or other pets caused by the foster dog**

The foster program is vital to our success in placement of greyhounds as pets. You, as a foster parent, not only have the responsibility to care for your foster dog, but to care for your own pets and family members as well. QCG recognizes the invaluable commitment you have made. However, accidents and injuries to your pets and family members can happen. QCG will not be liable (financially or otherwise) for any and all injuries that may occur to your family members and / or other pets caused by your foster dog. We simply do not have the financial capability to pay for these incidents. Please note that most injuries or incidents can be prevented if you faithfully read and follow the guidance of this manual.

## **Insurance**

We encourage you to enjoy your foster dog and socialize him / her as you would your own dog. We do, however, want to remind you that we do not carry insurance as a group. If your foster dog inflicts injury on another dog or person, your homeowner's policy may cover you under the liability portion of your policy. You may want to check with your insurance company to find out how and when such protection is extended.

## **Lure Coursing**

Lure coursing your foster dog is not permitted. This includes but is not limited to straight line and traditional courses.

## **The Adoption Process**

While the foster greyhound is in your care, home visits will be done by QCG board members to prospective adopters. The purpose is to find the perfect match for your dog. For this reason, it is important that you keep the foster coordinator up-to-date regarding your dog's personality, behavior, health, and idiosyncrasies. For instance, you will want to note if the foster dog has diarrhea, begun to limp, etc. Please see Attachment C as we have provided a foster evaluation form for your use. It is not required but it makes a great document to release to the adoptive family when the time comes. When your foster dog's profile matches an adopter's profile, you will be contacted by a QCG board member for more information.

## **Adoption Tips**

Exposure, exposure, exposure! Take your foster dog everywhere you possibly can, show off the dog's positive traits and work on correcting any bad habits. Another tip that you may not have thought about: What you say about your foster dog, and greyhounds in general, has a great impact on potential adopters. You can scare them away by jokingly saying the wrong thing. Emphasize your dog's positive qualities, cute expressions, and delightful personality. We have had adopters change their minds because of an offhand remark a foster parent made. Your input regarding potential forever homes is invaluable. Please communicate with the foster coordinator or a QCG member regarding the potential placement of your foster greyhound. Be a positive advocate for your foster!

## **Bouncebacks (Re-homes)**

A bounceback is a dog that has been adopted and is returned to us. When we get a lot of bouncebacks, it makes it harder for us to rescue dogs from the track. Some of the most common reasons dogs are returned are:

- Housebreaking problems
- Separation anxiety
- Inappropriate behaviors (such as jumping on furniture, people, and counters or pulling while on a leash)

As a foster parent, you can help! Make sure your foster is housebroken. Practice leaving the dog home alone so it is used to a working person's schedule. Correct undesirable behaviors such as jumping, counter surfing, digging, chewing, housebreaking, and pulling on a leash. Your goal, as the foster parent, is to have the dog 'graduate with honors' into its new home!

**THANK YOU FOR ALL OF YOUR HARD WORK & SUPPORT!**

## ***Attachment A***

### **Fostering Q & A**

Here are some answers to some commonly asked questions we receive from foster families.

Q: What do I do if another foster family asks me to foster their dog and I already have a foster dog?

A: Tell the person to contact the foster coordinator, who will help address any problems the foster parent may be having. The foster coordinator will know whether or not there are any foster home openings. Under no circumstances should you take the foster dog without authorization from the foster coordinator.

Q: What do I do if another foster family asks me to take their foster dog for only a few days, say while they go away for the weekend?

A: Again, you should tell the person to contact the foster coordinator for appropriate advice about what to do with the dog.

Q: When I took my foster dog to the vet, the vet recommended a blood panel and other tests. It sounds reasonable to me. How should I respond to the vet?

A: ALL medical care, except for emergency, life-saving procedures, must be approved by the foster coordinator, adoption coordinator, or president.

Q: I was out walking my foster dog and met the most wonderful couple. They instantly fell in love with my dog. I told them that if they filled out an application right away, they could adopt my dog. Did I do the right thing?

A: By all means, encourage them to seek further information and fill out an application. However, make NO promises to anyone regarding your foster dog or any other dog. You have no way of knowing how many applications are being acted upon or which dogs are currently available.

Q: I know the perfect family for my foster dog. Can I take him over to their house to see how they'll get along?

A: Visits need to be OK'ed by a QCG board member. Only QCG members may do home visits.

Q: My foster dog bit my other dog and I incurred a vet bill for the medical treatment. Will QCG reimburse me for this expense?

A: No. QC will be liable (financially or otherwise) for any and all injuries that may occur to your family members and / or other pets caused by your foster dog. We simply do not have the financial capability to pay for these incidents.

***Attachment B***

Complete the following evaluation form as applicable. Should you have a dog in foster care for an extended period of time, please complete an additional evaluation form or use a blank sheet of paper to update the information. Be sure to contact the foster coordinator if any significant problems arise or you have any questions.

Dog: \_\_\_\_\_ Male Female (circle one)

Date entered foster care: \_\_\_\_\_

**Feeding Maintenance & Schedule**

Brand: \_\_\_\_\_

Dry Canned Combination (circle one)  
Other (explain) : \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Time Schedule: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Instructions / Comments:

# Attachment C

## Personality

Please circle each that applies to your foster greyhound. Explain if necessary. Please be sure to indicate any improvements or setbacks. Be sure to include any measures taken to help the dog adjust or to resolve any issues.

Friendly	Calm	Fearful	Timid
Alert	Active	Dominant	Submissive
Outgoing	Shy	Aggressive	Curious

Week 1:

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Week 2:

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Week 3:

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## Behavioral Evaluation

Please circle each that applies. Explain if necessary. Please be sure to indicate any improvements or setbacks. Be sure to include any measures taken to help the dog adjust or to resolve the issues.

Calm when left alone	Displays anxiety when crated
Not afraid of household noises	Easily stressed (explain below)
Displays no destructive behavior	Displays destructive behavior (explain below)

Afraid of noises (household, storms, etc)

Territory marking issues

High prey drive

Would do better where someone is home more often

Would do better in a calm/quiet environment

Comments:

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### Socialization

Please circle all that apply. Explain if necessary. Please be sure to indicate any improvements or setbacks. Be sure to include any measures taken to help the dog adjust or to resolve any issues.

Prefers company of other dogs

Shows anxiety or confusion if not around other dogs

Spends most of its time with other dogs

Recommend s/he be placed with other dogs

Prefers the company of people:

- “Velcro” dog – with you at all times
- Content to play with you or self instead of other dogs
- Plays with other dogs, but limited interaction

Cat / small animal friendly

NOT cat / small animal friendly

NOT cat / small animal tested

Other dogs not recommended

Small children not recommended

Crowds & noisy environment overwhelming

Comments:

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**Training**

Housebreaking: Please explain if there are any issues and list measures taken to correct them. Please be sure to indicate any improvements or setbacks.

\_\_\_\_\_ No housebreaking issues.

**Stairs**

Explain if having trouble learning / managing stairs.

\_\_\_\_\_ No problems with stairs.

**Medical**

\_\_\_\_\_ No medical concerns

\_\_\_\_\_ Extended Care

Heartworm Medication: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Given: \_\_\_\_\_

Medication: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Dosages: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

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## ***Attachment D***

### **First Aid Tips and Helpful Hints for Foster Parents**

The following first aid and helpful hints information is in no way comprehensive or replaces the advice and care provided by a trained veterinarian. This is for treatment of minor issues that may arise with your new foster greyhound. If you feel your foster greyhound requires professional medical care, please contact the foster coordinator, adoption coordinator, or the president. If the situation requires immediate medical care, please take your greyhound to the QCG veterinarian (listed on page 4 of this guide) or an emergency clinic.

#### **Diarrhea / Soft Stools**

Greyhounds that are right off of the track have undergone a great deal of stress. Along with the changes in their schedules and living arrangements, they also have / will encounter dietary changes. They may also be host to internal parasites. All of the above can cause your foster greyhound to have bouts of diarrhea and / or soft stools. Be sure your foster dog is getting plenty of water to avoid dehydration. Some greyhound may have different reactions to the food they are eating. If you find that nothing else is a contributing factor to mushy stools, you need to consider changing brand and ingredients of the food being fed to your foster greyhound. If diarrhea continues for 3 or more days, seeks veterinary care. To help with stool issues, try the following (not all together and only as needed):

- ❑ 1 teaspoon of Milk of Magnesia (or similar product) as needed to stop diarrhea
- ❑ Add plain canned pumpkin (not pumpkin pie mix) to the kibble. A couple of teaspoons to ¼ cup, depending on severity of diarrhea and size of dog – adjust amount as needed.
- ❑ 1 Tablespoon to ½ cup of cottage cheese added to dry kibble
- ❑ Active acidophilus tablets – can be found at the local pharmacy

If diarrhea is chronic, you may be advised to feed your foster dog a bland diet:

- ❑ Withhold food for a period of 24 hours to allow the digestive system to settle
- ❑ Prepare a diet of boiled chicken or hamburger and rice or cottage cheese (1 part chicken/hamburger to 2 parts rice or cottage cheese)
- ❑ Feed for a couple of days and then reintroduce their normal diet gradually over the next few feedings.

#### **Flatulence (Gas)**

Due to stress and diet changes, your foster greyhound may have excessive gas. Yogurt work wonders on this offending ailment. If gas continues, consider evaluating the bran of food you are feeding. A change may be necessary.

- ❑ Add one tablespoon of yogurt to each meal. Plain or vanilla works best as some dogs may have tummy upset with fruited yogurt.

#### **Sores**

Sores may be due to insect or dog bites that have been left untreated and / or become irritated due to less than clean living conditions. Often times, these sores do not heal and can spread if the dog is under any stress. Staph bacteria, which is a regular presence in the body, can become highly activated and aggravate the existing sores. This is not a contagious form of staph. If the sores do not respond to treatments, fester and become pus-filled, seek veterinary care as your foster will probably require a dose of antibiotics to help him/her heal. If you notice the sores in the early stages, follow these steps to help the healing process:

1. Trim/ shave the hair at the site of the sore. Hair holds moisture to the area and you want it to stay dry.
2. Clean the sight with warm water and mild soap or antiseptic wash.
3. Pat the area dry and dab it with hydrogen peroxide – this will help the area to dry out.
4. Apply a very thin layer of antibiotic ointment to the area. Antibiotic ointments are heavy in moisture, so apply a very thin layer.
5. Monitor the sight, keeping it as clean and dry as possible.

### **If your foster is on antibiotics**

If your foster greyhound is on antibiotics, add a teaspoon of yogurt to their food daily until the treatment is over. Yogurt is used to replenish the good bacteria in the digestive tract that can be destroyed or depleted during the use of antibiotics. Antibiotics can cause an upset stomach and loss of appetite; so don't panic if this occurs. If this behavior should continue and loss of appetite increase, contact the foster or adoption coordinator. A change in medication may be necessary.

### **Bleeding Tails**

You may receive a foster greyhound whose tail has a lot of hair worn off and sores on it. Treat the sores as mentioned above. Occasionally, one will arrive with the tip of the tail actively bleeding due to a sore or a split. If your foster is a real tail wagger, this could slow down the healing process, especially if they are banging it against a hard surface or the wire crate. Sometimes open and split tails can take a week or longer to begin to heal, so be patient and diligent. Try the following steps to help the healing process:

1. Clean the bleeding area with warm water and mild soap or antiseptic wash.
2. Put a thin layer of antibiotic ointment on the area.
3. Cover with a gauze pad and wrap securely with gauze. Secure the gauze in place using a medical grade tape or vet wrap. You may have to tape, using bandage tape, the gauze wrap to the tail itself to prevent it from coming off. Greyhounds have sensitive skin and may react to the adhesives on certain tapes. Try to use a bandage tape made for sensitive skin or use the vet wrap.
4. Remove and clean the area as necessary.
5. Reapply bandage if needed.

If the simple gauze wrap is not working, try the following:

1. Take a clean, white athletic sock and cut about 2 -3 inches off the top.
2. After cleaning the bleeding area on the tail, clip the sock over the tail.
3. Tape the sock securely to the tail using a bandage tape or vet wrap.
4. Remove the sock as necessary, clean area and replace as needed.
5. The athletic sock is great for dogs that keep pulling tighter gauze wraps off their tail. It provides a soft and thick cushion for the tail and is lighter and less restrictive. It also allows air to pass and heal the wound.

You can also try the hair roller:

1. Take a foam hair roller and place it over the open area.
2. Secure the roller in place with gauze and bandage tape.
3. Remove as necessary, clean and replace if needed.

### **Shedding and Flaky Skin**

Stress and diet changes are factors in maintaining a healthy coat and skin. Your foster greyhound may arrive with their coat in rough condition and will go through a period of excessive shedding. Once this coat has shed, a new fresh coat will grow in its place. A quality food is key to development of a

healthy coat and skin. You do not need to feed your foster greyhound supplements at this point, but feel free to contact the foster coordinator if you have any questions. Regular grooming will help remove dead hair and aid with the growth of new hair and stimulate the skin. Should you notice long term excessive shedding or noticeable and unusual bald spots appearing, contact the foster coordinator or adoption coordinator. Your foster greyhound may require a thyroid or other medical tests.

### **Nighttime Crying**

As a foster home, you may experience some sleepless nights with your new foster greyhound. Remember that they have gone through a lot of changes and it may take time to adjust to their new life. It is not unusual for the new foster to cry during the night. This may be a result of lifestyle changes, stress, sores or pain due to injury, anxiety, loneliness, fear of the dark, etc. Try the following suggestions to help your foster with his transition to a sleep-filled night. Please remember that every dog adjusts at a different rate. It may take only a couple of days or even a week or more for your dog to make the adjustments.

1. Leave a light on and gradually lower the lighting during the night until you have weaned them to full darkness.
2. Leave a night light on.
3. Check to see if they are cold and provide appropriate crate bedding.
4. Soft music / talk radio – track kennels play music at all times, so the dogs are used to the noise.
5. Medical issues – if this is the case, you will notice the problems during the day as well.
6. Place the dog's crate or bed in a room where someone sleeps so he will not be alone – this usually works wonders for crying greyhounds.

### **Putting Weight on your new greyhound**

Greyhounds race at different weight than most of us are used to seeing in a pet greyhound. Most often, they will enter your home needing to put on several pounds, usually 5 – 10 pounds. If your foster greyhound arrives in a more severe state, you may need to add even more pounds to bring him/her to a healthy weight.

Initially, you will want to feed your new foster greyhound more than a normal amount of food. For example, if the greyhound would normally be fed 4 cups per day, you may need to feed it 5 -6 cups per day until it reaches an acceptable weight. Do not rush the weight gain. Evaluate your foster greyhound's needs and work from there. Should you have a greyhound that is very underweight, but also has a parasite issue as well, feeding the dog 6 -8 cups a day to put weight on may cause more harm than good. Also, if ill or at the desired weight, the dog's body may not process the excessive food properly and this could lead to further medical issues, extra weight gain, or excessive waste.