

GREYHOUNDS HEALTH AND WELLNESS QUARTERLY

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

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GREYHOUNDS... UNIQUE DOGS?

If you are reading this, you are either the owner of a retired racing Greyhound or a veterinarian. As a veterinarian you may have been noticing an increase in the number of retired racing Greyhounds coming to your clinic. You may also have realized that your dog or patient is “unique,” when some of the values on her/his bloodwork and even other findings fall outside the reference ranges for dogs. Based on that, the purpose of this quarterly newsletter is to keep you informed and up-to-date on Greyhound-related subjects. Some of these include history, idiosyncrasies of the breed, predisposition to diseases, and some useful resources. Also, we will keep you updated about all the studies we are conducting at The Ohio State University Greyhound Health and Wellness Program (OSUGHWP).

We hope you enjoy it as much as we do.

LET'S START WITH THE BLOODWORK....

Bloodwork is a very important diagnostic tool in veterinary medicine. A complete blood count (CBC) and blood chemistry profile provide data that helps the veterinarian arrive at a diagnosis. But that useful tool could also pose the risk of leading to a misdiagnosis if you do not know that Greyhounds have their own “normal values.” Some of the idiosyncrasies of the bloodwork in Greyhounds (and in some other sight hounds) are summarized below.

Higher Values	Lower Values
↑ Mean packed cell volume (PCV)	↓ White blood cell count
↑ Hemoglobin concentration	↓ Neutrophil count
↑ Red blood cell count	↓ Platelet count
↑ Whole blood viscosity	↓ Serum protein concentration
↑ Serum creatinine concentration	↓ Globulin concentration
↑ Prevalence of vacuolated eosinophils	↓ Alpha-globulin concentration
↑ Glomerular filtration rate	↓ Beta-globulin concentration
	↓ PFA-100 closure time
	↓ Thyroid hormones (T ₄ and fT ₄).

DID YOU KNOW?

The popularity of retired racing Greyhounds has increased in the past few years. It is estimated that approximately 120,000 Greyhounds live in homes as pets, compared to about 55,000 Greyhounds in racetracks. Therefore, it is important that veterinary students, health-related professionals, rescue organizations, and owners recognize the physiological peculiarities of this breed.

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GREYHOUNDS AT THE VETERINARY TEACHING HOSPITAL, THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Recently we established the first ever dedicated Greyhound Clinics, where every Friday of each month the Greyhound team is scheduled to see Greyhound patients. The members of the "HoundTeam" include Dr. Guillermo Couto, Dr. Francisco Alvarez, Dr. Ana Lara, Dr. Cristina Iazbik, Dr. Liliانا Marin, Dr. Paulo Vilar, Dr. Jill Yaissle, and the veterinary technicians Nicole Westendorf and Janet Charske. We are currently seeing 20 to 25 Greyhounds per month, and receive five to 20 consults on Greyhound health issues



Greyhound patients in the ward



Top: Vinnie and Guido resting after blood donation.

Bottom: Part of the Greyhound team receiving the dogs for the spay, neuter, and dental program

Additionally in the Transfusion Medicine and Animal Blood Bank at OSU more than 80 percent of the donors are Greyhounds.

If you would like to learn more about the program please visit our webpage

www.vet.osu.edu/bloodbank.htm



In collaboration with Greyhound Adoption of Ohio (GAO) in Chagrin Falls, Ohio, we established an extremely successful spay, neuter, and dental clinic program for retired racers in 2004, where third-year veterinary students under the direct supervision of Small Animal Surgery faculty and residents perform routine spays, neuters, and dental cleanings on up to 75 Greyhounds per year.



Top: Dr. Couto and Jen, a vet student, doing a physical exam in a Greyhound.

Bottom: Surgical preparation of one of the Greyhounds.

GREYHOUNDS

Greyhound: Brief History of the Breed.

As one of the most ancient breeds of dogs known to humans, Greyhounds' roots extend across many geographical areas all around the world. Some evidence suggests they were first known in Turkey, as evidenced by cave drawings and artifacts from as long ago as 6000 B.C. (Branigan, 2004). These drawings and carvings throughout the Middle East, Asia and Africa suggest the breed's presence for thousands of years. Once Greyhounds were established in Egyptian society, they were well-loved and even revered as dogs that guarded the kings' temples. Many were buried with the Pharaohs and sometimes even mummified. Greyhounds went on to enjoy high status in ancient Greece and Rome, and were kept as hunting dogs and guards, sometimes for the gates of the cities.

Greyhounds likely arrived in America with the Spaniards in the 16th century and with the English colonists (Cunliffe). Early uses of the breed included protection of livestock and crops by hunting hare, rabbit and coyote. In the late 1800's, they were one of the first six breeds registered with the American Kennel Club (AKC), apparently the only breed representing the sighthound family at that time (Sullivan, 1999).

The Greyhound Club of America was formed in 1907 and fanciers of the breed began holding conformation and coursing events. Once a "practical motorized artificial hare" was developed by Owen Patrick Smith, racing began to be conducted in South Dakota, Utah and California. Eventually, race track involvement began in the U.S. in approximately the 1920's (Cunliffe).

The Greyhound is mentioned in the *Old Testament* (Proverbs 30:29-31), Homer's *Odyssey*, Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, and Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Merry Wives of Windsor* (Moore, 1995). Some have suggested the origin of the term "Greyhound" is derived from Old English "grei" ("dog") and "hundr" ("hunter"), while others suggest it comes from "gre" or "graes," indicating "first rank." (See discussion of name derivatives in Moore, 1995.)

Greyhounds are raced in the United States, Mexico, Great Britain, Ireland, Spain, Australia, New Zealand and throughout South America and the Caribbean.

www.adopt-a-greyhound.org/tour/tour9.html.

Their racing careers typically begin when they are eighteen months old and can last until they are five. Most are retired between the ages of three and five (NGA, 2006).

Gaye F. Colvin. Asheville Cohort

HoundTeam



NEWS! The HoundTeam has recently created a dedicated Greyhound e-mail account where you can send your questions or comments:

greyjosu@osu.edu



Some Current OSU Greyhound Studies

- Web-based health survey in retired racing Greyhounds: comparison with results of a survey in AKC Greyhounds.
- Salivary and plasma cortisol concentration, and plasma epinephrine and norepinephrine concentrations as indicators of stress in retired racing Greyhounds.
- Causes and mechanisms of diarrhea in retired racing Greyhounds (funded by Iams).

How to Contribute...We depend on your generosity.

To make a donation to support the Greyhound Health and Wellness Program. Please Contact Dr. C. Guillermo Couto (couto.1@osu.edu), or Karen Longbrake, Director of Development at (614) 688-8433 or mailto:longbrake.1@osu.edu. We thank you very much for your generous support so that we may continue our mission to help the Greyhounds.