

Safety Protocols – Keeping Your Foster Dog Safe!

We can't thank you enough for fostering with NDR! We realize it is a huge responsibility and commitment opening your heart and homes to these dogs in need and we sincerely appreciate the time you dedicate and the love and care you provide.

DOG-PROOFING YOUR HOME

Foster dogs often come from a shelter environment, and even if they have previously lived in a home, we don't always know how they will react in a new home. So, before bringing home a new foster dog, you'll want to survey the area where you are going to keep your foster dog. Remove anything that would be unsafe or undesirable for the dog to chew on, and latch securely any cupboards and doors that the foster dog could get into. People food and chemicals can be very harmful if consumed by dogs, so please store them in a place that the foster dog cannot access.

Never underestimate your foster dog's abilities. Here are some additional tips for dog-proofing your home:

- Make sure that all trash cans are covered or latched and keep them inside a closet. (Don't forget the bathroom trash bins.)
- Keep the toilet lids closed.
- Keep both people and pet food out of reach and off all counter tops.
- Move house plants or secure them. Some dogs like to play with them and may knock them over.
- Make sure aquariums or cages that house small animals, like hamsters or fish, are securely out of reach of your foster dog.
- Remove medications, lotions or cosmetics from any accessible surfaces.
- Move and secure all electrical and phone wires out of reach. Dogs may chew on or get tangled in them.
- Pick up any clothing items that have buttons or strings, which can be harmful to your foster dog if consumed.
- Relocate knickknacks or valuables that your foster dog could knock down.

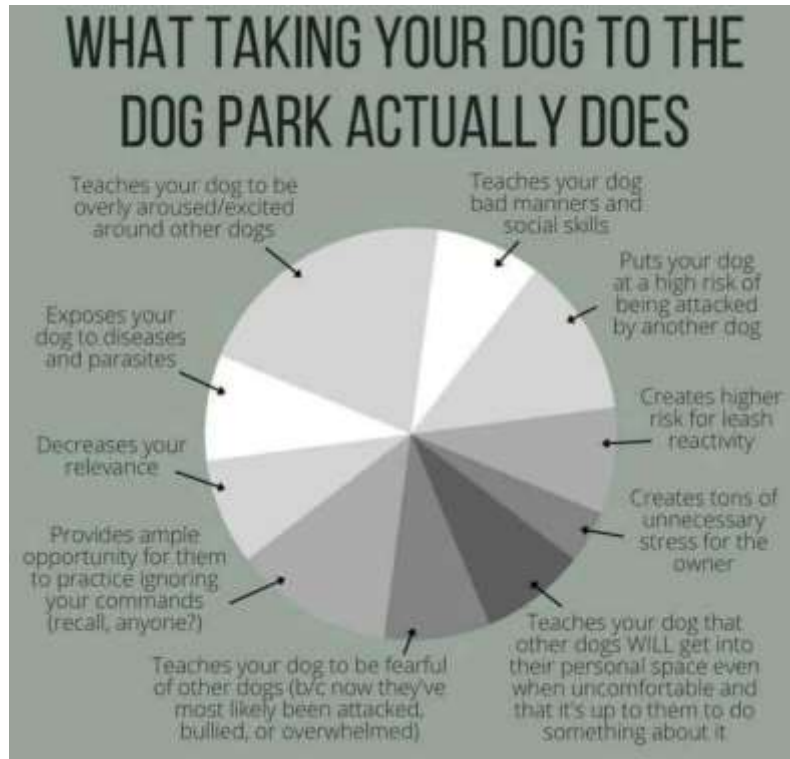
DOUBLE LEASHING

Two restraints are to be used at all times when the dog is outside of your home/yard. This involves using a collar attached to a leash in addition to A SLIP LEAD. If one restraint fails the other one is there as a backup. A dog is not able to back out of slip lead when used properly. The slip lead should be placed above the collar, closer to the dogs' ears. PLEASE WATCH THE FOLLOWING VIDEO ON PROPER USE AND FIT OF THE SLIP LEAD;

<https://youtu.be/oLpCoK9Ysh0> (Slip Lead)

NO DOG PARKS / OFF LEASHING

Please do not take your foster dog to dog parks as there is a much greater risk of dogs engaging in fights due to it being an uncontrolled environment as well as higher chance of the dog picking up parasites or disease resulting from close contact with other dogs and their feces.



DECOMPRESSION

It is imperative that you allow your foster dog to decompress upon arriving in your home. Your foster dog needs time to acclimate to the new sights, sounds, smells and most importantly people in the home. During this decompression period your foster dog is getting to know you and deciding whether or not you can be trusted. You are a stranger so during this period it is essential you do NOT force your foster dog to engage in things they may find fearful (ie. going in the car, going on walks, meeting people) which results in breaking any trust you have developed with them thus far. If you are fostering a shy, nervous or fearful dog the decompression period will be longer. Trips in vehicles should only be for necessary situations such as veterinary visits. PLEASE READ THE ATTACHED RESOURCE ON DECOMPRESSION TIPS FOR YOUR DOG and follow them to ensure you set your foster dog up for success.

SAFE COLLARING and LEASHING of DOGS

Your foster dog should have a Martingale collar, regular leash AND a slip lead. These are the items that you must have to ensure your foster dogs' safety. Many dogs arrive here with flat collars which are much easier for a dog to slip out of if not fitted correctly. Please advise us if your foster does not have a

Martingale Collar so we can arrange for one to be provided. If your foster dog currently has a flat collar, it is **IMPERATIVE** the slip lead be used anytime the foster dog is outside your home/yard. Please watch the following videos which show how to properly fit and use a Martingale collar;

<https://youtu.be/PoMThGO24O4> (Use of the Martingale collar)

<https://youtu.be/ffGW0s3ym7A> (Proper Sizing of the Martingale collar)

This video talks about the loop in the Martingale collar being chain. Martingale collars can also have a nylon loop and some collars are clipless (such as the one in this video) while others have a clip.

If any of the items become damaged, please email the foster team and we will arrange for a replacement to be sent to you.

CAR SAFETY

Please tether your foster dog to something inside the car. We have had many incidents where dogs have jumped out of windows or escaped as soon as the car door opens. Check that the dog has not chewed through the leash and that they are still tethered **PRIOR** to opening the car door.

MEDICAL AND EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS

While in foster the rescue is responsible for the medical care of the foster dog.

If you are fostering a dog who is on medications, please make sure that he/she gets all prescribed doses. Do not end medication early for any reason. If your foster animal has not responded to prescribed medications after five days (or in the time instructed by a veterinarian), please contact the foster coordinator who will connect you with our Vetting Coordinator.

If there are any medical issues or health concerns that arise, please contact one of the foster coordinators and they will put you in contact with the Vetting Coordinator. If an appointment with a veterinarian is necessary the Vetting Coordinator will make the appointment for you to take the foster dog to a clinic that the rescue deals with that is the closest to you. The rescue will pay for the vetting. All vetting appointments must be approved and arranged through the Vetting Coordinator.

Dogs generally do a good job of masking when they don't feel well, so determining if your foster dog is under the weather will require diligent observation of the dog's daily activity and appetite levels. It's a good idea to keep track of these levels in a journal. You'll also want to record any of the following symptoms, which could be signs of illness.

- **Eye discharge.** It is normal for dogs to have some discharge from their eyes when they wake up and some may have more than others, depending on the breed. But if your foster dog has yellow or green discharge, or swelling around the eyes (making it hard for him to open his eyes), or the third eyelid is showing, you need to contact the foster coordinator to schedule a vet appointment.

- **Coughing and nasal discharge.** Coughing can be common if your foster dog is pulling on leash. If the coughing becomes more frequent, however, watch for discharge coming from the nose. If the discharge is clear, the infection is probably viral and medication may not be needed, but check with the foster coordinator to find out if a vet appointment is necessary.

If the discharge becomes colored, make a vet appointment because the dog may have a bacterial infection. Be sure to monitor the dog's breathing. If the dog seems to struggle to breathe or starts wheezing, call the foster coordinator immediately. Also, once you notice nasal discharge, monitor the dog's eating habits more closely to ensure that he or she is still eating.

- **Loss of appetite.** Your foster dog may be stressed after arriving in your home, and stress can cause lack of appetite. But if the dog hasn't eaten after 24 hours, please notify the foster coordinator. Also, if the dog has been eating well, but then stops eating for 24 hours, call the foster coordinator to set up a vet appointment. Please do not change the dog's diet without contacting the foster department. An abrupt change in diet can cause diarrhea, which can lead to dehydration.
- **Lethargy.** The activity level of your foster dog will vary depending on age and personality. Keeping an activity log and journal will help you notice whether your foster dog is less active than he normally is. If the dog cannot be roused or seems weak and unable to stand, it's an emergency, so start the emergency contact protocol.
- **Dehydration.** Dehydration is usually associated with diarrhea, vomiting and/or loss of appetite. To test for dehydration, gently pinch the dog's skin around the scruff area. If the skin stays taut, the dog is dehydrated. Please call the foster coordinator the next business day to schedule a vet appointment.
- **Vomiting.** Sometimes dogs will eat too quickly and will immediately throw up their food. Occasional vomiting isn't cause for alarm, but if your foster dog continues to throw up, please notify the foster department. It could be indicative of infection.
- **Pain or strain while urinating.** When a dog first goes into a foster home, he or she may not urinate due to stress. If the dog hasn't urinated in more than 24 hours, however, please contact the foster coordinator. Also, if you notice the dog straining to urinate with little or no results, or crying out when urinating, please contact the foster coordinator immediately because it may be indicative of an infection or an obstruction.
- **Diarrhea.** It is important to monitor your foster dog's pooping habits daily. Soft stool is normal for the first few days after taking a dog home, most likely caused by stress and a change in food. If your foster dog has liquid stool, however, please contact the foster

department so that an appointment can be scheduled to ensure that the dog doesn't need medications. Keep in mind that diarrhea will dehydrate the dog, so be proactive about contacting the foster department. If your foster dog has bloody or mucoid diarrhea, please contact the foster coordinator immediately.

- **Frequent ear scratching.** Your foster dog may have a bacterial or yeast infection (or, in rare cases, ear mites) if she scratches her ears often and/or shakes her head frequently. These conditions can be treated by a veterinarian, so please call the foster coordinator to schedule a medical appointment.
- **Swollen, irritated ears.** If your foster dog has irritated, swollen or red or pink ears that smell like yeast, he may have an ear infection called otitis. This type of infection is more common in dogs who have very floppy ears. These dogs may need to have their ears cleaned more often to ensure that the infection does not re-occur.
- **Hair loss.** Please contact the foster department if you notice any hair loss on your foster dog. It is normal for dogs to have thin fur around the lips, eyelids and in front of the ears, but clumpy patches of hair loss or thinning hair can indicate ringworm, dermatitis or the early stages of mange. It is important to check your foster dog's coat every day.

Criteria for emergencies

What constitutes a medical emergency in a dog? A good rule of thumb is any situation in which you would call 911 for a person. Here are some specific symptoms that could indicate an emergency:

- Not breathing or labored breathing
- Symptoms of parvovirus: bloody diarrhea, vomiting, weakness, high fever (above 103.5 degrees)
- Signs of extreme dehydration: dry mucous membranes, weakness, vomiting, tenting of the skin (when the skin is pulled up, it stays there)
- Abnormal lethargy or unable to stand
- Unconsciousness or unable to wake up
- Cold to the touch
- Broken bones
- Any trauma: hit by a car, dropped, stepped on
- A large wound or profuse bleeding that doesn't stop when pressure is applied
- Loss of appetite for more than 24 hours

If your foster dog displays any of these symptoms, please immediately notify a foster coordinator. If the animal is vomiting or has diarrhea, but is still active, eating and drinking, you can probably wait until the next day to get help.

If a medical emergency arises, please immediately call one of the foster coordinators and we will immediately have vetting reach out to an Emergency Clinic to advise you will be bringing the dog into the clinic.