



FACT SHEET

Fleas



Fleas are very small, external parasites which survive by feeding on animal or human blood.

Their bites cause itchiness and irritation and may transmit diseases.

ABOUT FLEAS

Fleas are an external parasite which can cause intense itching, hair loss, and skin infections.

They can also transmit diseases to both dogs and humans, which makes flea prevention crucial.

They are typically 1.5 to 3 millimetres long, are usually dark in colour and have a flattened body which allows them to navigate through fur easily. Some species can leap up to 150 times their body length.

They prefer warm and humid weather, but can survive year-round. A flea on a dog can live for up to 110 days if not removed or killed.



HOW DO GREYHOUNDS GET FLEAS?

A greyhound might get fleas by being around other dogs or animals which have an infestation.

However, direct contact is not necessary given the eggs, larvae and pupae of fleas can be found in the environment. Fleas can survive for several months waiting for a host.

As fleas reproduce quickly, thousands of eggs can be deposited into soil or bedding which can result in an infestation.

HOW TO DETECT FLEAS

There are a number of ways to detect the presence of fleas.

Look for fleas on your greyhound: While fleas are small, they can be detected with the naked eye. The base of the tail, belly and groin are common spots for fleas. Using a fine-tooth comb and light can aid detection.

Look for flea dirt: Flea dirt is another term for flea faeces. It is dark, round (like coffee grounds) and usually found close to the skin.

Watch for symptoms: Even if you do not find fleas on your greyhound, they can still display symptoms.

You being bitten: While fleas do not typically live on human skin, they will still bite humans. Bites will show as small, red, itchy bumps and in some cases cause skin swelling and rashes.

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WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

The most common symptoms of fleas relate to skin issues given flea saliva is injected into the skin when they bite.

They include:

- Excessive scratching;
- Hair loss;
- Irritated skin - redness, tiny bumps;
- Pale gums in heavy infestations due to anaemia.

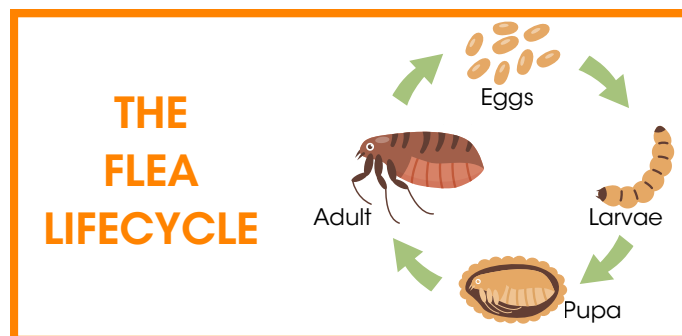
HOW TO PREVENT FLEAS

Preventing fleas is much easier and more cost effective than treating an infestation.

Effective flea prevention involves a combination of regular flea treatments, environmental controls and routine care.

Flea treatments:

- Apply flea treatments to all greyhounds on the property regularly and monitor effectiveness.
- Ensure all greyhounds receive adequate dose of medication, do not 'split' chew type medications to share between greyhounds as the active ingredient may not be distributed evenly through the chew.
- Treatment should be carried out year-round in most areas in NSW.
- Consult with your veterinarian about local resistance patterns and if rotation of treatments is beneficial.
- As all treatments have different active ingredients, use the free [Race Well](#) substance validator app to check the status of the medication under greyhound racing rules.



Environmental:

- Regularly wash bedding/rugs in hot water and dry on high heat setting or in direct sunlight.
- Keep grass short and remove any leaf litter.
- Vacuum all concrete and solid surface areas.

Routine care:

- Regular grooming can help you to spot flea problems early.

HOW TO TREAT FLEAS

Treating fleas on your greyhound is easily achieved by providing them with an oral or topical treatment - use the free [Race Well](#) substance validator app to check the status of the medication under greyhound racing rules.

However, given most of the flea population lives in the environment (in the form of eggs and larvae) it is important to treat the environment as well.

Treating all of your greyhounds and any other household pets is vital. All in-contact greyhounds should be treated at the same time.

Remove and wash all bedding, bed materials and rugs.

Vacuum all surfaces to remove eggs and treat solid surfaces with a flea growth regulator or long-acting insecticide. Pay particular attention to dark and humid areas.

If skin irritation develops and/or flea treatments are not working, seek advice from your veterinarian.

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions about flea prevention and treatment, please contact our veterinary team.



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