

Health Concerns in the Retired Racing Greyhound

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Bald Thighs Syndrome

"Bald thighs syndrome" is a condition that has puzzled the greyhound community since the beginning of dog racing. Initially thought to have been caused by friction created when the dog moves about in its crate and rubs against the sides, it is now thought to be of a metabolic nature. Most noticeable after greyhounds begin an intensive training program for racing, it is now believed that the stress of racing and/or training may cause the baldness as a result of chronically high concentrations of cortisol (a hormone produced by the adrenal gland in response to stress). Although there has been speculation that hypothyroidism may contribute to this condition, supplementation with levothyroxine sodium is not consistent in resolving the bald thighs syndrome. As with ventral comedo syndrome, this condition is of concern to adopters mainly because of its cosmetic appearance, but does not appear to have any systemic effects on the dogs and there has been no consistently effective treatment. Occasionally the bald patches may resolve after a long break from the stress of racing, but in some, the hair may never completely regrow.