

Robert McDowell's Herbal Treatments

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Kidney Health in Greyhounds:

The most common problems I treat in Racing Greyhounds are Kidney problems.

Why should this be so? Is it something we feed them? Is it a weakness of the breed? Is it something we do to them in training?

The way to explain it is to understand that when they race they run mostly on adrenaline. The races are really only sprints and the dog is in "overdrive". This is to say, the dog is doing what it was designed for which is to run a fast prey animal down over a short distance. Overdrive really means that it is not simply a question of the lungs supplying oxygen to the blood which goes to the muscles to make them work, but that the adrenal glands are working overtime as well and pumping adrenaline into the system to give the extra speed.

The adrenal glands in the body are small glands mounted on the Kidneys. By repeatedly over stimulating these glands the kidneys themselves are over-stimulated and commonly produce signs of cramping either late in a race or after it is over. This is really a buildup of acid in the muscles which is simply a sign that the kidneys were not able to keep with the job of keeping the blood acid levels in balance.

The Greyhound is a "nervy" sort of a breed and the modern dog is bred to be particularly so. By 'nervy' I mean on its toes, in a constant state of alertness, excited and ready to chase. The excitement of a race and the sound of the lure all build up, and in many dogs, the adrenaline is pumping furiously long before they get to race. Don't you all long to have one of those rare ones which will sleep in the Kennel before a late race and still win!

Our first response to cramping is often to give electrolytes or diuretics, or worse still to feed these chemicals as part of a routine program even where there are no signs of kidney problems. Diuretics and electrolytes over stimulate the kidneys and they may appear to help in the early days by flushing the kidneys after a race. Each time we use them however, they weaken the kidneys further and further until they cannot do their job without them and ultimately they cannot do their job even with them. Acidosis is a condition which reflects a physical breakdown within the kidneys and the problem is pretty well advanced by the time Acidosis appears.

The earliest signs of Kidney problems are often wetting in the kennel, followed by cramping after a run especially in the back, and then followed by blood in the urine.

I prescribe Herbal Tonics which tone up and restore kidney function which is a very simple matter herbally. I also try to talk trainers out of the routine use of Electrolytes and routine flushing with Diuretics. There are other things in the modern diet and supplement program which place a strain on the Kidneys, but these two substances are the worst.

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My standard Kidney Rehabilitation treatment tonic is the place I usually start whenever a Greyhound owner contacts me and expresses an interest in changing to more natural supplements. This can be obtained cheaply and quickly by ordering online.
[Click here.](#)

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