

## **Basic Greyhound Safety**

by Melissa Boos

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Through meet and greets, occasional boarding, and just being out and about, my husband and I come across a lot of greyhounds. These greyhounds are owned by people brand new to greyhound adoption, by veterans who have had greyhounds for years and years, by volunteers with adoption organizations, etc. Some are single dog families and others have multiple greyhounds. The reason I am writing this article is because over and over I see one single, yet potentially very dangerous basic safety issue with many of these dogs. It involves their collars and identification. Certainly every single one of these greyhounds has a collar and id. That is not the problem. The problem is where these tags are attached to their collars. Greyhounds wear a special collar called a martingale collar. Some are fancy, some are plain, but they are all constructed similarly with two side rings and one center D ring. The D ring is where the leash is attached for walking. The collars are constructed this way so that they tighten when pressure is exerted on the leash (and the D ring) so it will not slip over the greyhound's skinny head. The safety issue is when owners affix the dog's tags to the D ring, rather than to one of the two side rings. This seems innocuous enough, but this can be potentially very dangerous. That safety hazard is choking. If those tags get caught in the bars of their crate, in the small space between boards on a backyard deck, in a fence É anywhere, and do not come loose, the dog will attempt to free himself and may even panic. In that attempt they are exerting pressure on the D ring of their collar and in effect causing their collar to tighten and tighten around their neck. In a dog that seriously panics they could hurt their neck or worse: choke themselves into unconsciousness or possibly death. Think this couldn't happen to your grey? It can. I know from personal experience as it's happened to one of our greys twice! Fortunately, we keep all of our greys' tags on the side rings rather than the D rings. Thank goodness, because twice our male, Bear, has gotten his tags caught in the bars of his crate. Both times from the force of him trying to free himself he ripped and broke the tags off of his collar. Not an easy feat!! I shutter to think what the outcome would have been had those tags been attached to his D ring. And all this happened while we were at work and not at home, which makes it even scarier. So please go take a look at your own greys' collars and see if your tags are on the D ring. If they are, for your greys' safety's sake, move them over to one of the two side rings. The fact that you're preventing something awful from happening will make you glad you did it!