

# **The Puppy Mill Rescue Manual**

**Northern New England Westie Rescue Inc.**

**[www.nnewestierescue.org](http://www.nnewestierescue.org)**

**2011 Edition**

# Chapter 1:

# Your new Rescue

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## In this section you will learn:

- ✓ Health tips for new adopting Families.
- ✓ Intestinal parasites.
- ✓ Vaccinations.

## Learning about rescue dogs

### Health issues

Thank you for adopting one of our rescue dogs. We know that adopting a new dog into your home is an exciting event and can sometimes be a bit overwhelming with all the new information there is to take in.

We are therefore providing this guide to help get you off to a good start in making sure that your new dog adjusts well in your home, and that you understand the unique issues that can arise with rescue dogs. One of the first things we want to cover is the health of your dog. Every rescue dog is different, but in general you want to take your dog to your veterinarian as soon as possible after he/she is placed in your home.

Some rescue dogs have come from good homes and due to circumstances beyond the control of the former owner (such as a death, or elderly owner going into assisted living) have been placed for adoption. Generally these dogs will have few health issues as they have had good health care for most of their lives. Other dogs, such as the *puppy mill rescues* may have significant health issues due to the horrible conditions under which they've been raised. Let's cover some of the typical issues you may encounter

## Intestinal parasites

The biggest single problem we battle is intestinal parasites. Puppy Mill dogs live in horrific conditions and are often infested with multiple parasites when



we first get them. Although we worm aggressively, some parasites still manage to slip through. **We strongly urge everyone to do a stool sample RIGHT AWAY for intestinal parasites including giardia.** Most parasites are easily and inexpensively treated, but can cause problems if not treated.

Even dogs with healthy intestines can have some loose stools after the stress of transport. Canned pumpkin is very helpful in firming up loose stools. Most dogs like it and will eat it right off the spoon. After treating for parasites, pumpkin can be helpful particularly when given with some good quality Yogurt with active cultures to restore normal intestinal bacteria. Stonyfield Farm is a

good choice.

## Vaccination

Most of our dogs have only been vaccinated for rabies; so it's important to get them in right away to get started on vaccines for Lyme disease and other common New England diseases. It may be advisable to limit your dog's outdoor activities until your vet says there is adequate protection from common diseases. This is especially true in the spring and fall when ticks are very active and many Lyme disease infections occur.

## Teeth

Puppy Mill dogs are often fed a horrible diet and many come with very bad teeth. This may give the impression that they are older than they actually are, so don't be surprised if the vet says he thinks your dog is older than it is.

## Housetraining and Urinary Tract infections

Most of our dogs, and especially the puppy mill dogs, are not housetrained, so they will have accidents in the house initially, but if the problems persist, especially if the dog seems to need to go in small amounts quite frequently, it may be worthwhile to check for a urinary tract infection. We have only seen it a few times and it is an easy thing to miss, but also an easy thing to diagnose and treat.

# Chapter 2:

## Puppy Mill horrors

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### In this section you will learn:

- ✓ The horrors that puppy mills cause.
- ✓ Coping with traumatized dogs.
- ✓ How your dog may see the world.

### The Westie Puppy Mill Survivor

Puppy mill Westies have acquired behaviors common to most mill dogs. Your new Westie puppy mill survivor may exhibit some of the following traits:

#### Fear of Humans

The only time puppy mill dogs have had human contact it was a painful, terrifying experience. They have not been socialized to know that humans can be kind and can be trusted not to hurt them

- Build trust slowly
- Take a non-threatening posture lying on the floor with your eyes averted. Let him come to you and sniff.
- This may not happen on your first attempt but may take a few days
- Usually the foster home has helped remove much of the fear of humans, but there will still be work need to get them over the terror they have experienced



**1- Puppy mill rescue identified with a string and a number tag.**

## Holding

Mill dogs don't know that you're not trying to restrain them but to comfort them. They have never been held, living most of their lives in wire cages. Their only experience has been to be grabbed by any reachable part of their body—tail, legs, ears and scruff.

- Making a touch non-threatening takes much time and patience
- Begin by holding your Westie and petting him gently for a few seconds, speaking softly and then placing him down carefully
- Lengthen this time gradually

## Fear of men

Because of the cruelty they have experienced at the hands of men, most mill dogs have a fear of men.

- They will usually bond first with the lady of the house
- After some time they will come to trust the man of the house. Please be patient and nurturing during this time.
- A weird behavior we've noticed is a strong fear of men in baseball caps. We theorize that many men who run puppy mills wear baseball caps, and this has triggered significant fear reactions in many of the dogs. *We suggest that you be aware that men wearing baseball caps may traumatize the dogs and act accordingly*

## Sounds

Common household noises are foreign to a mill dog. They have never experienced TV, cooking sounds, telephones, doorbells, etc. Some of these sounds may trigger a fear reaction because it is a sound similar to one that caused terror in the puppy mill.

- They may shrink into a corner or they may bark at these strange sounds
- **NEVER** raise your voice, clap your hands, or intentionally make loud noises until your Westie has become confident that these noises will not hurt him and becomes comfortable in your home.

## Walking on grass and home flooring

Puppy mill Westies have spent their entire lives confined in a cage and may have walked on **any** surface except cage wire or concrete.

- They will be afraid to step onto grass from a patio surface

- They will be afraid to step over a threshold onto different flooring in your home, for example for a carpet onto tile or vinyl flooring
- They may be so afraid of a different surface that they may not even go to their food or water
- Please make sure that they have access to food and water at all times even if it means granting some leeway until your Westie has the confidence to cross a threshold.
- They have never walked up steps or stairs and they may be confused to know what to do. This may be more of a problem because they do not have the leg strength to climb stairs having lived their entire life in a wire cage. Be patient and gently guide them up each step one at a time. Be careful about going down stairs as they may get confused and potentially tumble down the entire stairway. A good rule-of-thumb is to treat them as you would a baby and keep an eye on them around stairs.
- Baby sock with grippers on the bottom may help your Westie walk on slick flooring and ease the transition from surface to surface.

### Walking and running

Some mill survivors have been held in wire cages since birth, and may walk with a stilted gait, and may have never learned to run

- Sometimes their feet will be swollen or their paws splayed from only walking on cage wire
- For sore, swollen paw pads, use Bag Balm™ or Musher's Secret Pad Balm™.
- They may have urine burns on their paws from living in their own urine and filth. These can be very sore and makes walking painful. These sores require an antibiotic ointment.

### Aversion to Eye Contact

Many mill survivors refuse to make eye contact with humans

- This is an indication of fearful submission that decreases as the dog comes to realize you will not harm him and learns trust.

### Afraid of his food

Anytime the cage door is opened on a mill dog fear is the response, because an evil human is opening the door, even to give him food.

- Food is used to entice a dog out where it can be reached, *and that usually means pain*

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- It is not unusual for a puppy mill Westie to run in the opposite direction when you put dinner on the floor.
- Turn your back and walk away until the dog feels safe enough to eat.
- Let him eat undisturbed even if it means leaving the food out during the night so he will have access to it at a time when it is quiet, no one is around and the dog feels safe enough to eat.

### Learning to speak English

Your puppy mill Westie has never been spoken to

- He does not know words
- He has never had a name and has no comprehension of what a name is or means
- He does not know instructions or commands
- He can only tell by the **tone of your voice** what is being communicated to him
- **ALWAYS** speak in a kind, soft and gentle tone
- **Praise, Praise, Praise** often when he begins to associate words with actions.

### FLIGHT RISK- Please read carefully!

#### **All Puppy mill survivors are fear driven and a HIGH FLIGHT RISK**

- Given the chance a puppy mill dog will run until it can no longer go on.
- **NEVER** take your dog outside a securely fenced yard until you are thoroughly bonded
- **ALWAYS** use a harness which is securely tightened or a Martingale type collar ( [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martingale\\_\(collar\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martingale_(collar)) ) in fact, we often recommend that you use both. This is VERY IMPORTANT, please do your homework on this matter. The life of your new dog may be at stake.
- A dog may pull out of a harness if they are not tight and the dog is backing away from you. **DO NOT PULL THE DOG IN A HARNESS IF THEY ARE BACKING AWAY FROM YOU.**
- If you must take your Westie outside a secure area, double check that the harness is secure.
- It may be advisable to also use a

*We recommend that you use a Martingale type collar or a body harness. Securing your dog is CRITICAL to his safety.*

collar then run the lead from the collar through the harness for extra security

- Your dog may have an imbedded microchip, have your vet check to see if he has one and then go online and register the dog in your name. Many puppy mill dogs have chips although they are not registered. The puppy mills may use it to identify specific dogs. If your dog does not have a microchip, have one implanted and register it.

## Kennel Shock

Things that we take for granted may cause distress and uncommon fear for your puppy mill survivor. This is referred to as *Kennel Shock*

- Your puppy mill survivor may have never drunk from a water bowl or even eaten food from a bowl
- Puppy Mills use an inverted watering device on the side of the cage. A bowl of water or food may be confusing and even cause distress
- Mills usually don't bother to remove the dog before hosing down the cages, so they are afraid of watering hoses and flowing water
- Mill survivors have never played with a toy. A good way to help them learn the fun of playing is to get toys that make a noise and roll them back and forth. It may take several days before your Westie will watch the game. He may try to get the toy to hide it, but continue the game the same time every day until he starts making noises with the toy and soon he will start looking forward to play time.

## Marking & Housetraining

No puppy mill comes housetrained.

- Most males will mark, and many females too.
- Put your dog on a schedule.
- Always say Potty Outside or something similar
- Use positive reinforcement praise and petting until he begins to put words with actions
- The good news is that most puppy mill dogs are not puppies, and they may catch on faster to the finer points of housebreaking
- Some dogs may never catch on to the finer points of housebreaking.
- Use a "belly band", which is a cloth with Velcro on both ends and a sanitary pad inside wrapping around the belly of the dog if you male dog continues to mark. Check EBay for Belly Bands

## Puppy Mill smell and color

Every mill dog has a peculiar odor and is discolored

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- The odor is imbedded in their pores and will take a month or so to remove
- Bathing in a mild oatmeal shampoo is recommended , followed by a 50/50 apple cider vinegar & water mix as long as there are no opens sores
- Their coats are urine and feces stained a dark yellow to brown
- Bathing will help the coloring somewhat, but the staining will need to grow out
- We do not recommend a whitening shampoo as it may be too harsh and probably will not work
- Just be patient and you will have a beautiful, white, clean smelling Westie in a couple of months

# Chapter 3:

# Preparing for your new dog

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## In this section you will learn:

- ✓ What to feed your new dog
- ✓ Stuff you'll need before you get your dog
- ✓ Tips on training.

## Things to do before you get your dog

Lucky you... you're about to get a creature who will love you unconditionally, who asks for little and gives everything they have. The essential ingredient to a happy dog is love, but beyond love you'll need the essentials of shelter, food, and a nice place to sleep.

### Food<sup>1</sup>

Westies tend to have sensitive stomachs, and having the right food is essential to preventing the allergies that Westies are known to have. There are two choices when feeding Westies, prepare your own natural food, or use one of the commercial dog foods available commercially. Most Westie owners choose the latter, selecting a good well known brand for their Westie. Nutro Max Lamb and Rice is a well known brand ([www.nutro.com](http://www.nutro.com)) which we've had excellent results with. Another dog food brand we've used successfully is Wellness dog food (<http://www.wellnesspetfood.com/index.aspx>) Wellness Core brand is grain free and has been used very successfully with dogs who have skin allergies. Although we have fed our dogs a combination of both wet

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<sup>1</sup> Note- We have no affiliation with any dog food brand and these are only suggestions

and dry dog food in the past, we now try to keep all of our dogs on dry food alone as it keeps better, and since the huge scandal involving canned dog food from dozens of well-known brands all coming from the same manufacturer which had a problem with Chinese additives leading to the deaths of dozens of dogs, we feed exclusively dry dog food. Dry dog food also has the added benefit of helping to keep the dogs teeth clean. What's important is not the specific brand of dog food, although we generally prefer the brands listed and a few others like Iams, Natural Balance and a few others, but insuring that the dog gets a balanced diet. We recommend that if you find your dog having skin problems, you might want to change your dog food to one that is gluten or grain free. We have been known to add a little parmesan grated cheese to the dog food to add some scent variety, and we've known others to add a little garlic powder to achieve the same effect. Remember that Westies are part of the Terrier family, and thus are scent dogs, so anything that adds some scent appeal will make your dog happy.

*We like to feed our dogs a ½ cup of dry dog food in the morning and another ½ cup in the early evening.*

Some of our Westies have been known to like vegetables, particularly baby carrots, while others simply shun them. Giving your dogs vegetables is a good way to keep the weight off your dog and thus insure a healthy and long life. You should definitely avoid feeding your Westie table scraps as they tend to upset the dogs stomach.

### Things to NOT feed your dog<sup>2</sup>

There are a number of foods that people eat which are poisonous to canines including

Items to avoid	Reasons to avoid
Alcoholic beverages	Can cause intoxication, <i>coma</i> , and death.
Avocado	The leaves, seeds, fruit, and bark contain persin, which can cause vomiting and diarrhea.

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<sup>2</sup> Courtesy of [www.peteducation.com](http://www.peteducation.com)

Bones from fish, poultry, or other meat sources	Can cause obstruction or laceration of the digestive system.
Cat food	Generally too high in protein and fats.
<a href="#">Chocolate, coffee, tea, and other caffeine</a>	Contain caffeine, theobromine, or theophylline, which can cause vomiting and diarrhea and be toxic to the heart and nervous systems.
<a href="#">Citrus oil extracts</a>	Can cause vomiting.
Fat trimmings	Can cause <a href="#">pancreatitis</a> .
Fish (raw, canned or cooked)	If fed exclusively or in high amounts can result in a <a href="#">thiamine (a B vitamin)</a> deficiency leading to loss of appetite, seizures, and in severe cases, death.
<a href="#">Grapes, raisins and currants</a>	Contain an unknown toxin, which can damage the kidneys. There have been no problems associated with grape seed extract.
Hops	Unknown compound causes panting, increased heart rate, elevated temperature, seizures, and death.
Human vitamin supplements containing <a href="#">iron</a>	Can damage the lining of the digestive system and be toxic to the other organs including the liver and kidneys.
<a href="#">Macadamia nuts</a>	Contain an unknown toxin, which can affect the digestive and nervous systems and muscle.
<a href="#">Marijuana</a>	Can depress the nervous system, cause vomiting, and changes in the heart rate.
Milk and other dairy products	Some adult dogs and cats may develop diarrhea if given large amounts of dairy products.
<a href="#">Moldy or spoiled food, garbage</a>	Can contain multiple toxins causing vomiting and diarrhea and can also affect other organs.
<a href="#">Mushrooms</a>	Can contain toxins, which may affect multiple systems in the body, cause shock, and result in death.
<a href="#">Onions and garlic</a> (raw, cooked, or powder)	Contain sulfoxides and disulfides, which can damage red blood cells and cause <a href="#">anemia</a> . Cats are more susceptible than dogs. Garlic is less toxic than onions.

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Persimmons	Seeds can cause intestinal obstruction and <a href="#">enteritis</a> .
Pits from peaches and plums	Can cause obstruction of the digestive tract.
Raw eggs	Contain an enzyme called avidin, which decreases the absorption of <a href="#">biotin (a B vitamin)</a> . This can lead to skin and hair coat problems. Raw eggs may also contain <i>Salmonella</i> .
Raw meat	May contain bacteria such as <i>Salmonella</i> and <i>E. coli</i> , which can cause vomiting and diarrhea.
Rhubarb leaves	Contain oxalates, which can affect the digestive, nervous, and urinary systems.
Salt	If eaten in large quantities it may lead to <a href="#">electrolyte</a> imbalances.
String	Can become trapped in the digestive system; called a "string foreign body."
Sugary foods	Can lead to <a href="#">obesity</a> , dental problems, and possibly <a href="#">diabetes mellitus</a> .
Table scraps (in large amounts)	Table scraps are not nutritionally balanced. They should never be more than 10% of the diet. Fat should be trimmed from meat; bones should not be fed.
Tobacco	Contains nicotine, which affects the digestive and nervous systems. Can result in rapid heart beat, collapse, coma, and death.
Yeast dough	Can expand and produce gas in the digestive system, causing pain and possible rupture of the stomach or intestines.
<a href="#">Xylitol</a> (artificial sweetener)	Can cause very low blood sugar (hypoglycemia), which can result in vomiting, weakness and collapse. In high doses can cause liver failure.

## Treats

Like humans, too many in between meal treats can cause a serious weight problem, so you must keep the number of treats to a minimum and count them in the total daily caloric intake of your Westie. Obviously you should select treats that are compatible with any allergies that you dog may exhibit. We find that the Old Mother Hubbard treats are tolerated well by Westies

([www.oldmotherhubbard.com](http://www.oldmotherhubbard.com)). They are made in Massachusetts, and are generally available in New England pet stores.

We have had **excellent** luck giving our rescues plain old soup bones from the butcher or supermarket. The marrow is a good source of protein, and the gnawing on the bone is a great teeth cleaner. We have had rescue dogs with really bad teeth and given them soup bones only to find their teeth significantly improved after a couple of bones. Make sure that the bones are raw as opposed to cooked since cooked bones can splinter. One caveat however... sometimes the richness of the marrow can cause a bit of loose stools, so be prepared!

## Toys

Don't be surprised to find that your puppy mill survivor doesn't take to toys right away. They don't understand what play is all about, they've spent their whole lives being abused and ignored, so play is a foreign concept. We've found that the Kong type toy filled with peanut butter will introduce them to the concept of playing with a toy. Be patient with your new dog and understand that a toy can be confusing and even frightening to him. Leave a few stuffed toys with "squeak's" inside and squeak them occasionally and they'll soon get the hint, although some dogs, particularly older rescues, never quite get the hang of toys.

## Required stuff

### Collar or Harness???

Every dog needs a collar, and your dog should have one with his ID tag and rabies tag attached at all times. We do not like to walk our Westie with his leash attached to the collar, but rather to a tightly fitting harness with a stout lead attachment point at the top. We particularly like the vest harness which offers a very secure attachment point and a loop which can be used to secure the Westie with a seat belt in the car.

Westies must **ALWAYS** be securely attached to a leash when outdoors and there should be **absolutely** no possibility of them slipping out of a collar or harness. We have seen several dogs killed when they bolted from their owner to chase a squirrel and ran in front of a car. **Westie hunter instinct is VERY strong in some dogs, and they WILL bolt in front of a car if they see another small animal like a cat or chipmunk!!!** We particularly like the Pet Vest from Canine Friendly Products (<http://www.rcpets.com/index.php/>) which is secure and can be used in the car. We strongly suggest using a harness rather than a collar when walking the Westie. It's much more secure when properly tightened, and much easier on the dogs

If you want to use a collar, we suggest a color which will tighten when the dog pulls against. Not the “chain” choke collars, but one with a loop of nylon which tightens. However we strongly recommend a harness from which the dog cannot escape, particularly for puppy mill dogs. We have seen the unfortunate result of a puppy mill dog escaping from a collar, and it is absolutely heartbreaking.

### Leashes

There are two options for leashes, a stout nylon, leather, or some other fabric lead of approximately 6 feet, which is what is normally used for training, and a retractable lead which is a long line on a spring wound reel and allows the dog to roam a bit.

The problem with the retractable lead is that there is no way to quickly reel the dog back in if he’s out 50 feet and decides to run into the street, so we recommend that you **NOT** use a retractable lead in an urban environment, particularly on streets where there is vehicular traffic. The retractable lead is fine if you are walking the dog in a setting where he can have free range over the entire length of the lead without danger.

There is also several types of leads designed to break the dog of his habit of pulling on the leash, such as the “Gentle Leader” type of lead. Please be very careful when using any non-standard harness to insure that the dog **cannot get out of the collar** or you may lose your dog. *If in doubt about using a device to break the pulling habit, use two leashes, a longer one securely fastened to the harness, and a shorter one connected to the Gentle Leader*

### IDtags and Microchipping

Most of the puppy mill dogs have been micro-chipped to facilitate identifying individual dogs in large groups. We’ve found that the microchips have **NOT BEEN REGISTERED** therefore are of little value in recovering a lost dog unless you know the number and have registered it. **We strongly suggest that you ask your vet to scan your puppy mill survivor to see if he is “chipped” If so PLEASE register the number.** You can register the microchip with the

*A microchip is of little value if it is not registered. Check to see if your dog is chipped and register it with the AKC*

American Kennel Club online at [www.akccar.org](http://www.akccar.org). There is a minimal fee, but a microchip is of NO VALUE unless it is registered.

If you find that your dog is not micro chipped we strongly urge you to have it done. Many local animal shelters will do it for a minimal fee, as will your vet. We are strongly considering

micro-chipping all of our dogs prior to adoption, and may do so in the near future.

## Crate

We have found that because many of our dogs have spent most of their lives confined in small crates, they sometimes can react in one of two ways to being put in a crate. Some dogs will find it very comforting, feeling safe in a crate and adjusting well to being in it. In other cases it may remind the dog of a traumatic past, and they will become agitated and uncomfortable. There is really no way to predict which behavior they may exhibit. We have found that having a relatively large crate available with the door open or removed will allow you to determine how your dog feels about a crate. If they shun it, it may be a problem to keep them in it, whereas if they seek it out and sleep in it then they find it comforting. Place some blankets in the bottom of the crate for comfort and leave the door open, you will soon find out how the dog feels about it. Most dogs seek out protected places to sleep, so it will not be unusual even for non-puppy-mill dogs to seek out a crate.

There is a school of thought about using the crate for training, putting the dog into the crate for a short time as a "timeout" when the dog misbehaves. Unless the dog is comfortable in the crate this can cause emotional distress and we recommend avoiding using the crate with puppy-mill-dogs. They sometimes exhibit the canine equivalent of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) when confronted with actions that remind them of their time at the mill. *Remember that a puppy mill is the dog equivalent of a concentration camp and act accordingly.* If you must confine your dog, it's much better to use a bathroom, particularly if the dog reacts poorly to the crate

## Fences

A securely fenced in yard, with a fence at least 4' high is the greatest treat one of our dogs can experience. Freedom... imagine having spent your whole life in a cage and then being adopted by a family who showers you with love and allows you to go outside without restraint!! Although it can be scary for a recent puppy mill survivor, they will soon adjust to their new found freedom. A few words of caution however; make sure your yard is escape proof. Terriers are known escape artists, and we have seen (and have a video to prove it) a terrier climb a 4' chain link fence. Terriers will also dig under many fences, so please insure that it is difficult for them to do that. It may be necessary to put bricks or cement blocks under the fence, or insure that the fence is securely imbedded into the ground to insure that they cannot escape. Not all dogs will do this, but you don't want to find out the hard way.

## Clothes

Westies have thick coats and generally don't need a coat or sweater to keep them warm. That doesn't mean that you shouldn't indulge your dog with whatever makes you both happy, but only that it's not really necessary. If you take your dog on the water, a good pet lifejacket is essential however, and we particularly like the Ruff Wear brand of lifejackets, although there are several others available that are equally good.