

# THE NEWFOUNDLAND AND YOU

*A Pamphlet for the  
New and Prospective Newfoundland Owner*



*(photo by Sue Lynn Morton)*

*A publication of*  
**THE NEWFOUNDLAND CLUB OF AMERICA, INC.**

*Revised Edition, November 2010©  
18th Printing; All Rights Reserved*

*B L A N K*

## INTRODUCING THE NEWFOUNDLAND

The Newfoundland is a large, strong, heavy-coated, active dog, equally at home in the water and on land. He is a multipurpose dog, capable of heavy work. While at first the Newf may appear somewhat placid, he is actually a fairly active dog that enjoys and needs daily exercise. Despite his size, he can reside comfortably in a small home or apartment, provided he is given ample opportunities for exercise.

Newfoundlands are renowned for their unique gentleness, even temperament, loving nature, and devotion. Historically, they have displayed a keen sense of responsibility and life-saving instincts, and their acts of heroism, both on land and on sea, are recorded in history, myths, and legends. These attributes make a Newf a good choice as a companion for children and adults alike.

While Newfs are well known for their gentle disposition, personality and temperament can vary throughout this breed, just as with humans. While the Newf has strong guardian instincts, he is not a watchdog, and harsh treatment and inattention will produce resentment and poor behavior in any dog. In addition, one should see that a Newf (or any dog) is not abused or harassed by children or adults. A growing puppy may be more subject to injury than his size would lead you to believe. Never allow a child to climb on a growing puppy or ride on an adult Newf.



The oily nature of the Newfoundland's double coat effectively keeps him from getting wet to the skin, and combined with his webbed feet, deep, broad chest, and well-sprung ribs contributes to his swimming ability. Despite this heavy coat, he adapts to warm as well as to cool climates. In warm climates, the long outer coat remains, but the undercoat thins out to some degree. The warmer the weather, the more careful you must be to avoid overheating. Also provide a Newf with plenty of shade and fresh water and do not leave him in the sun or unattended in a parked car.

Historically, in Newfoundland, he was used as a working dog to pull nets for the fishermen and to haul wood from the forest. Elsewhere he patiently did heavy labor of all kinds, powering the blacksmith's bellows and the turner's lathe.

There are many conflicting stories as to the origin of the Newfoundland. It is agreed only that he is one of the older breeds of dogs in existence today. He may not have originated in Newfoundland, though skeletons of giant dogs have been discovered in Indian gravesites in Newfoundland dating from the 5th century, AD. One of the more appealing speculations rests on the legend that when Leif Erikson arrived in North America about 1000 AD, a large black dog, resembling a Newfoundland, called Oolum, was aboard his boat. It is recorded that early in the 18th century some Norwegians kept and used Newfoundland-like dogs for bear and wolf hunting.

The first record of the Newfoundland dog on the island whose name he bears dates from 1732 when an unknown author wrote, "The Bear Dog of a very large size is very watchful, his business is to guard a court or house,



and has a thundering voice." It is possible, too, that some Great Pyrenees were bred to this Newfoundland dog by the Basque fishermen sailing between Newfoundland and their homeland.

The Newfoundland breed as we know it today was developed largely in 19th century England and America. The Newfoundland is an ancestor of the present day Labrador and Chesapeake Bay Retrievers, which follow the Newfoundland in their natural swimming ability. The rough-coated St. Bernard owes its coat to the Newfoundland.

The Standard—written by the Newfoundland Club of America and approved by the American Kennel Club—calls for a dog that impresses the eye with great strength, dignity and pride. The Newf in motion gives the impression of effortless power. Good proportion is important for a smooth,

strong drive. The Newfoundland has a water-resistant double coat. The outer coat is coarse, moderately long and flat. The undercoat is soft and very dense. The Standard calls for sweetness of temperament as the hallmark of the breed.

While the Newf is found in a variety of coat colors, color is secondary to breed type, structure and soundness.



The recognized colors in the Standard are black, brown, gray, and white and black. Black, brown and gray may appear as solid colors or solid colors with white on the chin, chest, toes, and tip of tail. Also typical is a tinge of bronze on a black or gray coat and lighter furnishings on a brown or gray coat. While not common, brown or gray Newfs are not considered unusual and should not be sold at a higher price than other colors.

A white and black dog has a white base coat with black markings. In the past, these have been called Landseers because their coloring is typical of Newfoundlands painted by Sir Edwin Landseer. The head is solid black or black with white on the muzzle, with or without a blaze (a white stripe extending from the muzzle between the eyes onto the head). There is a separate black saddle and black on the rump extending onto a white tail. Clear white or white with minimal ticking on the white and black dog is preferred. Other color combinations may occasionally be found, but they are not recognized in the Standard; these dogs may be AKC registered and can compete in performance events, but cannot compete in the breed ring.

A Newfoundland puppy normally grows at a very rapid rate. The average height at the shoulder is 28 inches for adult dogs and 26 inches for adult bitches. Adult dogs typically weigh between 130 and 150 pounds and bitches between 100 and 120. Large size is desirable, but never at the expense of balance, structure, and correct gait.

Once the Newfoundland breed has caught your eye, you should take time to learn as much as you can about the breed before you invest in a cute puppy. There are many ways to further your education, such as going to

dog shows and meeting Newfs and their owners at regional Newfoundland club events. You will also find valuable information about the breed on the Newfoundland Club of America (NCA) website ([ncanewfs.org](http://ncanewfs.org)).

Love does seem to be a warm puppy, but slow down and see if an adult Newfoundland is what you want to live with for the next 10 years or so. In addition to their size, Newfs also come with drool and lots of shedding. (Be wary of breeders who claim their dogs never drool!) Acquiring any dog should be a family decision made with the intention of keeping the dog forever. Telling a child, “You can have a dog as long as you take care of it, but if you don’t, we’ll get rid of it,” is not fair to the dog. It is also a poor lesson for the child—it tells him a once loved, living creature can be easily disposed of when it becomes a bit of a bother. If you have any doubt about your ability to afford the dog or to take proper care of it, don’t get one.

## **SELECTING YOUR NEWFOUNDLAND**

Selecting the right breeder can be the most important step you will take. Good breeders are most likely to be members of the NCA. While we cannot select a specific breeder for you, the Newfoundland Club of America (NCA) has some suggestions to help you. The Newfoundland Club of America and most of the regional clubs provide referrals to Newfoundland breeders, usually through a Breeders List that is available on their websites. This is an excellent way to find a breeder. Some breeders encourage prospective puppy buyers to visit their dogs, even if they have no puppies available at the time. Often they can refer you to other breeders, who may have puppies or a litter due.



*(photo by Andrew Patterson)*

Another excellent way to meet breeders is at a dog show. To find out when and where a show will be held in your area, check with the regional Newfoundland club in your area, refer to the American Kennel Club website ([akc.org](http://akc.org)), or do an internet search for “dog show superintendents.”



*(photo by Ruby Silver)*

When you find a conveniently located show, check the appropriate website about a week before the show to learn the time Newfs will be shown and how many are entered. At the show, talk to the exhibitors—after the judging of Newfs is finished—and ask lots of questions. Although not all exhibitors will be breeders, most of them will be glad to tell you about their dogs and the dogs’ breeders. When you watch the dogs being judged, you will notice that not all Newfs are identical in either appearance or personality, and you will probably prefer “the look” of some better than others.

While searching for a breeder, do not be taken in by fancy websites or ads. Beware of a breeder who has not done health checks on the sire and dam. (These records can be seen at [offa.org](http://offa.org).) Also beware of purchasing a puppy, sight unseen, over the Internet. A reputable breeder will want to establish a relationship with you before placing one of his puppies in your care. A responsible breeder will not sell a puppy to just anyone with a credit card as though the buyer were purchasing some inanimate object. Reputable breeders have a life-long interest in the dogs they produce. Also beware of a breeder who promises more or less than others, or whose price quotations are much higher or lower than others. Remember, however, that Newfoundland puppies can vary in cost depending on age and potential quality.

If possible, visit the breeder personally, even if this means a long drive. A

visit will enable you to meet the breeder, the dam, the litter. You will also see the conditions in which the puppies are being raised. Although elaborate equipment is not a necessity, the facilities can and should be clean. A good breeder will also question you during the visit about your plans and your own facilities for a Newfoundland. A good breeder also may be rightfully concerned if you do not have a fenced yard, because no breeder wants to hear that your Newf has run away or was hit by a car.

Many Newf owners, however, are delighted with dogs they bought sight unseen from breeders they have never met face-to-face. Indeed, some of the best-known kennels have shipped puppies all over North America and even to remote corners of the world. If a visit to a breeder of interest to you is not practicable, plan to spend some time on the phone or emailing. Good breeders are proud of their reputations and will be happy to refer you to satisfied puppy buyers and introduce you to long-standing Newf fanciers.

If you and the breeder decide that you will be taking a puppy from a litter, the breeder will help decide which puppy should become a part of your family. Breeders know the personalities of their puppies and this is essential to taking home a puppy that will fit your life style and expectations. Beware of the breeder who wants to sell you a puppy less than eight weeks of age or wants to sell you two puppies from the same litter. Reputable breeders will typically keep the puppies until at least eight weeks of age. By that time, they will have been examined by a board-certified cardiologist for inherited heart problems, given at least one series of vaccinations, and declared free of all parasites.

Good breeders are most likely to be members of the NCA. You are far



less likely to obtain satisfaction in dealing with an Internet breeder, commercial outlet, or a pet store. Good breeders will never sell to pet shops or puppy mills. While these establishments frequently obtain stock that cannot be

*(photo by Douglas A. Gundersen)*

sold on a breeder's reputation, they typically charge more for a mediocre or poor specimen than a good breeder will ask for one of his outstanding prospects. A reputable breeder will follow the development of his stock, while a dealer probably will have no interest after the completion of the sale. The Newfoundland Club of America prohibits its members from selling to pet shops.

A Newf puppy from an AKC registered litter will be eligible for individual registration with the American Kennel Club, the principal registry for purebred dogs in the U.S. When buying a puppy, you should be given either an AKC registration application with the litter number on it, or the AKC registration certificate with the in-



*(photo by Andrew Patterson)*

dividual dog's registered name and number on it, properly signed. AKC has available two different registration certificates: Regular AKC registration (white certificate with purple border) and Limited Registration (white certificate with orange border). Regular AKC registration entitles the dog to compete in all AKC and NCA events, and the offspring of a dog with full registration is eligible for registration. On the other hand, dogs on Limited Registration may compete in all NCA and AKC events, except conformation, and their offspring cannot be registered. Regardless of an individual Newf's potential for breeding or showing, responsible breeders use Limited Registration to prevent the dog from being bred; however, the breeder can change the registration from Limited to Regular if circumstances warrant.

Insist that the breeder provide a written contract when a puppy is purchased. If for some reason the breeder or seller cannot provide the AKC registration application at the time of sale, a written promise of when it will be provided should be part of the contract. The breeder should also provide such pertinent data as whelping date, sire, dam, pedigree, health records, and recommended diet and feeding schedule.

The pedigree is a four or five-generation history of your dog's ancestry (a



*(photo by Cissy Sullivan)*

family tree). A conscientious breeder, who has spent time studying and working with the breed, should offer to explain the qualifications of the parents and why they were a proper mating. It is nice to have a Newfoundland with many champions in the first three generations, but it is

even more important that the parents be of proven breeding quality. Occasionally good breeding quality dogs may not have been shown, but do produce quality puppies when properly mated.

AKC registration and/or pedigree is no guarantee of the quality of the puppy. Puppies can be evaluated as possessing show potential or as pet quality, but breeders differ in their approaches to evaluating puppies. A show prospect puppy is one that possesses the potential of meeting the breed Standard and exhibiting virtues of the breed with the absence of disqualifying faults. Such show prospects may or may not make good breeding stock. A breeding quality dog, generally a superior representative of the breed, is usually determined only after the dog has matured and has been evaluated for hereditary defects. Health records are available on open databases, such as those maintained by the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) and the NCA.

Pet quality dogs are just as enjoyable as family companions as dogs shown in the conformation ring. Usually they should be spayed or neutered. If you plan to show in conformation, discuss this with your breeder. Spayed and neutered Newfs may compete in AKC performance events and in NCA water or draft tests.

The breeder will assist you in selecting a puppy, but you should be attracted to the sire and dam of your puppy, because the puppy will probably mature to be somewhat similar to his parents in temperament, appearance, and

personality. At first glance, all the puppies may look alike to you. But look closely. They are all at least a little different in looks and movement, and each has a personality all its own. Above all, choose a puppy in good health. Unfortunately, quality is only an educated guess when the puppy is only ten weeks old, and if you are interested in showing, there is no sure-fire method of selecting the puppy that will be successful in the show ring.

You must allow for changes as the puppy matures. Most Newfs go through some awkward stages, especially during the first year, and at times seem to be all ears, all legs, or awkward because of uneven growth. Be patient; most will mature to be beautiful adults. The first year the puppy will get its height, the second and third years it acquires muscle and rib spring, and the fourth year it reaches maturity.

Your breeder will have a sales contract or agreement, which you should read carefully and discuss in detail before signing. Most contracts contain provisions for dealing with health problems that may develop and the care required to be provided by the new owner, such as



*(photo by John Bonnell)*

diets and neutering. As there is much discussion and controversy concerning these subjects, the buyer should discuss these topics individually with the breeder. Also, the Newfoundland breed is subject to heart defects and other hereditary conditions. No bloodline is absolutely free of all hereditary problems, but a breeder should be ready to discuss openly any dogs in his kennel and their pedigree. All breeds have tendencies toward various hereditary defects that require consideration in choosing a puppy.

The AKC requires that breeders keep full and accurate records of their litters. All responsible breeders are interested in the progress of their puppies. If for some reason you are unable to keep your Newf, the first person you should contact is the breeder. A reputable breeder will take the dog back,

regardless of the dog's age, or will find it a new home. If you find a new home for the dog, the breeder will want to have the name and address of the new owner. If you are unable to contact the breeder, the NCA strongly recommends that you do not place the dog in a shelter or rescue program not affiliated with the NCA or one of its regional clubs. In the best interest of your Newf, please contact the NCA or the regional club in your area for help through the clubs' rescue programs ([ncarescue.org](http://ncarescue.org)). The Newfoundland Rescue Network maintains a waiting list of pre-screened



*(photo by Michelle Alpern)*

adoptive homes that are interested in acquiring a Newfoundland from the Network.

## **HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS**

Newfoundlands, like all purebred dogs, are vulnerable to some extent to particular health problems, most of which also occur in other large and giant breed dogs. (Do not be misled into believing that mongrels are superior in this respect; they lack a basis on which the likelihood of hereditary disease can be evaluated.) Since these major health problems are not always outwardly evident in young dogs and have at least a modest genetic component, responsible breeders test (e.g., x-rays, blood tests) breeding stock prior to breeding.

No bloodline is absolutely free of all hereditary problems. In particular, the Newfoundland Club of America considers it necessary to test for four disorders (hip dysplasia, elbow dysplasia, cystinuria, and heart disease (particularly sub-aortic stenosis)). Many breeders also test patellas, eyes, and thyroid. Only one of these, cystinuria, has a simple inheritance and a genetic test allowing breeders to completely avoid producing the disease. The others have complex inheritance in which there will be no complete

guarantee that a puppy will not develop a problem as it grows into adulthood. Thus, in spite of pre-breeding clearances on both sire and dam, it is still possible that one or more of these diseases can occur.

### **HIP DYSPLASIA**

Hip dysplasia refers to a syndrome in which malformation of the hip joint occurs during development. The end results are arthritic changes and remodeling in the joint, which may lead to substantial disability and pain, particularly as the dog ages. There is considerable variability in the degree of difficulty individual dogs experience. Some with very poor x-ray results have few, if any, mobility problems, while others, with seemingly mild arthritic changes, experience more severe symptoms.

There are a variety of treatments available. Many dogs do well with conservative treatment—e.g., a variety of pharmaceuticals, such as Adequan® and glucosamine/chondroitin, as well non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (e.g., Rimady®, Previcox®, Ascriptin®, buffered aspirin). Other dogs with more severe disabilities may be candidates for surgical intervention, up to and including total hip replacement. None of these approaches is without the potential for problems, and it is important to have the advice of a veterinarian familiar with giant breeds, your dog’s breeder, and, if indicated, an orthopedic specialist,

It is quite clear that there is a genetic predisposition for hip dysplasia in some dogs, though there is also an environmental contribution. Inheritance is usually described as “polygenic” meaning that at least several, and possibly many, genes contribute to the vulnerability, and parents with clear hips can produce offspring with dysplasia.

### **ELBOW DYSPLASIA**

Elbow dysplasia, technically, like hip dysplasia, is the abnormal development of the joint. Unlike hip dysplasia, elbow dysplasia is thought to result from one of three distinct syndromes—fragmentation of the medial coronoid process (FCP), ununited ancone-



al process (UAP), osteochondro-  
sis dessicans  
(OCD)— all of  
which can result  
in secondary ar-  
thritic changes  
and mobility  
problems. Like  
hip dysplasia, all  
apparently have  
a substantial, but  
distinct, genetic  
component, and



*(photo by Peg Luomanen)*

breeders are dependent on the evaluation of x-rays to determine the status of dogs prior to breeding, since clinical signs may occur at a later age. Full expression of any of the three disorders may require surgical intervention.

### HEART (SAS)

Though other cardiac problems (e.g., patent ductus arteriosus (PDA), pulmonic stenosis, dilated cardiomyopathy, valve dysplasia) occur in the Newfoundland, the one of most concern is subaortic stenosis in which a ring of tissue encircling the descending aorta creates increased velocity and turbulence of blood flow. In its severe forms, it is a serious, sometimes fatal, problem and breeders generally have breeding stock evaluated by a cardiologist. Although any ambiguous finding with auscultation (stethoscope) is usually followed with an echo-cardiogram, many breeders believe all potential breeding stock should be checked with an echo-cardiogram, which can provide a much more definitive diagnosis.

Although the genetic component is as complex as that of hip and elbow dysplasia, with careful screening, a large majority of problems can be detected in puppies by 10 to 12 weeks of age. Many Newfoundland breeders are reluctant, therefore, to place puppies before this age. As with hips and elbows, it is possible that two “clear” parents can produce affected offspring. Regardless of age, heart evaluations should always be done by a Board-Certified cardiologist.

### CYSTINURIA

Cystinuria is a urinary disorder in which the dog is unable to resorb the

amino acid, cystine, from the urine. The resulting increases in urinary cystine concentration may result in stone formation. This can have potentially fatal consequences, particularly in males.

Unlike the other health problems, the inheritance of cystinuria is straight forward. Further, to some extent because of this simplicity, there is a genetic test available, which directly detects the mutation that causes the disorder. Since use of this test allows breeders to detect carriers of this recessive gene, breeders can avoid ever producing this disease.

### **HEALTH REGISTRIES**

The Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) maintains a registry for health testing results in purebred dogs. Radiologists associated with the OFA evaluate hip and elbow radiographs, and the organization also maintains a database of evaluations by other specialists (e.g., heart, cystinuria, thyroid, patella, eyes). The NCA endorses the use of this and other registries, particularly with respect to the four major disorders discussed above. It recommends that breeders submit results to be openly published, regardless of whether the results are positive or negative. The NCA also maintains a database of health testing results.

### **WHAT HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS MEAN TO THE PUPPY BUYER**

There are several lessons to learn from information regarding health status. First, with the exception of cystinuria, breeders cannot give an absolute guarantee that these problems will not occur in the puppies they produce. Though the frequency varies, there are no “lines” in which these problems are completely absent. Breeders can, however, minimize the probability of seeing these problems in the puppies they produce by rigorous testing and reporting health test results.

Further, most breeders will have specific clauses in their contracts specifying the conditions for reimbursement, etc., should a problem arise. Any puppy



*(photo by Tom Brant)*



*(photo by Michelle Alpern)*

buyer is advised to discuss these issues with breeders, and breeders should be willing to openly discuss their breeding strategy and the status of their dogs. Health clearances of breeding dogs can be verified at the OFA ([offa.org](http://offa.org))

and NCA ([ncadatabase.org](http://ncadatabase.org)) websites. Remember that communication with the breeder is exceptionally important. If you can't talk about it while you're considering a puppy, it's unlikely you'll feel comfortable if a problem arises later on.

## **CARING FOR YOUR NEW FAMILY MEMBER**

The average life span of a Newfoundland is about 10 years. Some problems found in Newfoundlands can be caused by the inexperience of new owners. Don't hesitate to talk to the puppy's breeder should problems arise. Keep your puppy healthy by scheduling regular visits to the veterinarian, providing a good quality food, and carefully observing your puppy for symptoms of diseases or other ailments. A good book on Newfoundlands or a general dog care book is a worthwhile investment.

### **VETERINARY CARE**

Find a reputable veterinarian who is experienced in large breeds. Your breeder or regional Newfoundland club may be able to help you find the right veterinarian in your area. Take your puppy to your veterinarian as soon as possible after you get him. Even if he has a recent health certificate, a double check is valuable, and you will get good advice on puppy care, shots, local health problems, etc. On your first visit, your veterinarian should check your puppy for parasites and recommend a heartworm preventative program. Your veterinarian may also discuss flea and tick control, because infestations can be a source of many problems. The first visit is also a good time for your veterinarian to microchip your puppy if the breeder has not done so.

Avoid unnecessary contact with other dogs until your puppy's immunities

are established. In general, follow your breeder's recommendations regarding vaccinations but discuss with your veterinarian any diseases endemic in your area. Your veterinarian will also advise you about rabies vaccinations, which must comply with state regulations.

### **GROOMING**

In any climate, grooming your Newf cleans his coat and skin, controls mats and shedding, reduces odor, and improves his appearance. Although grooming can be done on a table especially designed for that purpose, many owners prefer to groom while sitting with their dog on the floor.

Prepare your puppy to have his nails cut by frequently touching his feet and nails in many different situations. If you are unsure how to cut nails, seek assistance from your breeder, veterinarian, or another, more-experienced Newf owner.

Many grooming tools are available, and you will probably experiment before finding those that suit you best. Many owners prefer a long-toothed steel comb and a wire slicker brush or pin brush.



*(photo by Marie Acosta)*

Work against the grain back to front, and then reverse. Be sure the hair is brushed down to the skin, being careful not to scratch the skin. Pay special attention to the hair behind the ears, inside the hind legs, and behind the elbows where mats of dead hair typically are found.

After the permanent coat develops, shedding occurs twice a year; in neutered animals, however, the coat softens, grows profusely and shedding is a year-round condition. Grooming is an excellent time to check your Newf for parasites or skin problems.

When bathing your dog, use a good quality dog shampoo and be sure to remove all the soap to avoid skin irritation. Rinse and rinse again. Towel dry to remove as much moisture as possible. Although not necessary, many owners enjoy blowing their dog dry.

## SAFETY AND SHELTER

When you bring your puppy home, many breeders recommend having a crate for your puppy. Some breeders require it. Your puppy will quickly learn that this crate is his den, which is a great aid in housebreaking and keeping the puppy safe when you cannot be with him. Your puppy will need a lot of sleep, and it is also a great place to go to bed. As adults, many Newfs sleep in their crate with the door open. If a crate is not available, provide a sleeping rug or pad although many Newfs will select a cool tile floor. (Some have been known to cool off by sleeping in an empty bathtub!) A small utility room is another alternative. A dog sleeping outside should have a well-insulated house or shelter available.



*(photo by Marie Acosta)*

If your puppy will be spending time on slippery floors, cover the floors with numerous, small rubber-backed rugs. Discourage jumping, running, or playing on slippery surfaces because this can permanently damage the fast-growing, soft joints and bones of growing puppies. When picking up a puppy, insert one hand between the

front legs and the other hand between the hind legs until your hands touch and then lift evenly, thus supporting the entire weight of the puppy. Avoid heavy exercise, including cart pulling, with a Newf less than 18 months of age, because this heavy exercise can damage the puppy's body.

Most Newfoundlands enjoy swimming. It is excellent exercise that strengthens muscles without putting weight on the joints. Most Newfs prefer calm waters, such as lakes and streams, to rough pounding ocean surf.

Common sense can prevent many problems. Avoid strenuous exercise immediately before and after meals and during warm periods. Do not leave dogs unattended in a warm car or let them hang their heads out of car windows. Never let dogs run loose. In most cities, dogs must be kept in a confined area and walked on a leash, and all dogs enjoy a walk at least once a day. Never chain or tie your dog outside. Never leave a collar on an unat-

tended dog as it presents a choking hazard.

### **FEEDING**

It is quite common to hear those who do not know the breed say, “My, but he must eat a lot.” Probably because he is so placid, the full-grown Newf is a comparatively small eater. However, when he is growing most rapidly, between the ages of three and 18 months, the



*(photo by Sabrina Conci)*

Newf is a heavy eater. Be aware, however, that the amount of food suggested on dog food labels is generally excessive for large breeds.

Initially, do not drastically change your puppy’s diet but continue feeding your puppy what the breeder was feeding. If you decide to change the puppy’s diet, do so gradually.

An eight week-old puppy will normally eat three times per day; after five or six months, the puppy will eat twice a day. Never fatten a puppy to butterball condition, but keep him on the lean side, which is better for his rapidly growing body. Overfeeding will not make your puppy larger than his genetic makeup intended him to be. At any age, you should be able to feel a Newfoundland’s ribs without exerting undue pressure. Overweight reduces the life span and may provide fertile ground for other problems.

If eating kibble (dry food), an adult Newfoundland will eat about four to eight cups of dry dog food per day (or about one 50-pound bag of dry food per month). The amount of food an adult Newf requires is not proportional to his weight, but to his size and activity. Ideally an adult Newf should be fed two small meals a day rather than one large meal. Always remove uneaten food promptly.

### **THE NEED FOR TRAINING**

An untrained dog, no matter what its size, is a liability in modern society. For their own safety, all dogs require some form of obedience training. Being intelligent canines, most Newfs are readily trained.

Begin training the day you get your puppy. The destructive potential of

puppy teeth is enormous, and it is important that a puppy learn the meaning of “no” or “leave it” at once. Provide his own special toys for chewing and say a stern “no” or “leave it” when he picks up anything else.

At a minimum, the puppy should be taught to sit, down, stand, walk on a loose lead, come when called, and stay when told.

If you use praise, food, and plenty of encouragement,

the puppy will be a willing and adept student. By starting early, you can teach the puppy the commands you want him to know and avoid the development of bad habits. A good book on raising puppies and obedience training can be helpful.

One person in the family, preferably an adult, should assume the major responsibility for training, but all family members should know the commands, use them consistently, and know how to reward the puppy with food, praise, and encouragement. In addition to early training at home, if possible, enroll your puppy in a puppy kindergarten class, which is an excellent way to socialize your puppy and reinforce your home training. While most formal obedience classes require dogs to be six months of age, some will accept giant breeds at an earlier age. Without early training, however, a Newfoundland may outgrow his owner’s ability to handle him before he is ready for formal obedience classes.

If you intend to train your puppy for water work, it is advisable to introduce the puppy to water by the age of four months, but do so with care and consideration.

A Newf puppy can generally be housebroken at eight weeks of age, if you are willing to be consistent and watchful. However, for a few more months, accidents can happen—not because of disobedience, but because young dogs still do not have muscles that always cooperate. Since puppies sleep



*(photo by Marie Acosta)*

most of the time, it is easy to anticipate their needs. As soon as the puppy wakes from a nap, finishes eating, or after vigorous play, take him out to relieve himself. Do the same any time you observe the puppy circling and sniffing the floor. Respond to a successful trip outside with heavy praise. Since a dog wants to keep his den clean, a crate can be a useful housebreaking tool.

You must be vigilant, but once an accident has occurred, scolding the puppy is ineffective. Just clean up the accident and deodorize the spot. Similarly, rubbing his nose in the accident does no good and swatting the puppy with a rolled-up newspaper only creates a dislike for rolled-up newspapers. Continue to positively reinforce good behavior and ignore accidents and your puppy will be housebroken quickly.

Remember, consistency, patience, reward, and praise are the keys to all training.

## **A FEW THOUGHTS ABOUT BREEDING**

Before considering the breeding of any Newfoundland, you should carefully review the responsibilities you would be taking upon yourself. Most important, a breeder should have a life-long commitment to any dogs produced. This means the breeder would take back or accept responsibility for any dog produced, regardless of age, that could no longer be cared for by its owner.

Any breeder of AKC registered dogs also has a responsibility to the AKC to keep full and accurate records of all litters. He has a responsibility to follow the litters he produced to see that the dogs are in good homes and to evaluate the success of his breeding program.

The only valid reason for breeding is to produce quality Newfoundlands. In order to accomplish this goal, a mating must follow careful study. A thorough knowledge of the breed and its standard is a starting point. A



*(photo by Cheryl Hogus)*

study of both dogs' ancestries is essential, as is a full evaluation of both dogs' littermates. Newfoundlands of poor temperament should definitely not be bred, regardless of other characteristics.

Finally, do not plan to breed your Newf as a way of making money. Breeding is strictly a labor of love and an expensive one at that. Ask any responsible breeder! And if you want to show your children the facts of life, we recommend films. Don't use animals.

## **THE NEWFOUNDLAND CLUB OF AMERICA AND REGIONAL CLUBS**

The Newfoundland Club of America (NCA) is composed of people who share a common interest in the welfare of the Newfoundland dog, whether they are owners, prospective owners, or just admirers of the breed. Locally, Newf owners and friends join together in a network of regional clubs.

The NCA formulates policies regarding Newfoundlands, maintains a database and website; publishes a quarterly magazine, *Newf Tide*, and distributes a monthly email newsletter, *NCA e-notes*. The NCA also maintains a Breeders List, and many regional clubs assist in the sale of Newfs through their regional breeders lists. NCA and the regional clubs sponsor many activities that provide Newf fanciers with channels for appreciation of the Newfoundland's qualities and enhanced enjoyment of their dogs. *(photo by Marie Acosta)*



These activities include conformation shows; obedience, rally, and agility trials; water tests and draft tests; junior showmanship competition; carting; parades; backpacking; and just plain socializing. The regional clubs meet regularly to hold fun matches, host specialty shows, present educational programs, participate in local community projects, and exchange information with other regional clubs.

For further information regarding Newfoundlands, the NCA, or regional clubs, please visit the NCA's web site at [ncanewfs.org](http://ncanewfs.org).



*(photo by Cheryl Hogue)*



[ncanewfs.org](http://ncanewfs.org).