



Basic First Aid For Pets



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Basic First Aid For Pets

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Basic First Aid For Pets

Things to Know Before Disaster Strikes

When your pet has an emergency, being prepared is very important. Before an emergency strikes, be sure you know how your veterinarian handles emergencies or where you should go if you have one. In other words, does your veterinarian have someone on call, or do they use emergency hospitals for problems that arise after hours? Knowing what to do for your pet in a crisis could help save its life.

Please note that the following recommended first aid techniques and the first aid kit are not a substitute for veterinary treatment. While knowing basic first aid could help save your pet's life, always seek veterinary care following first aid attempts. If your pet's emergency is not covered here, please call your veterinarian immediately.

When Handling An Injured Animal

Any animal injured or in pain can bite or scratch you. Even the friendliest of pets must be handled with care. Use extreme caution when attempting to treat an injured animal.

CATS AND DOGS - Normal Pulse and Heart Rate

Cats: 150-200 bpm

Small dogs: 90-120 bpm

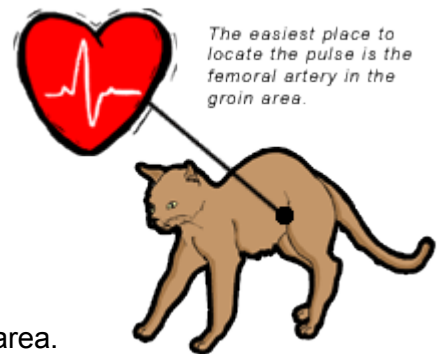
Medium dogs: 70-110 bpm

Large dogs: 60-90 bpm

Pulse should be strong, regular and easy to locate.

Checking the Pulse

The easiest place to locate the pulse is the femoral artery in the groin area. Place your fingers on the inside of the hind leg and slide your hand upward until the back of your fingers touches the abdomen. Gently move your fingers back and forth on the inside of the hind leg until you feel the pulse. Count the number of pulses in 15 seconds and multiply that number by 4. This will give you the beats per minute (bpm).

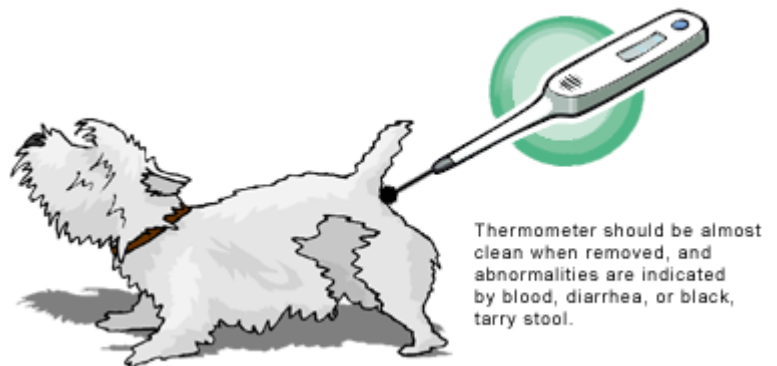


CATS AND DOGS - Normal Body Temperature

Cats and Dogs: 100-102.5 degrees

Taking the Temperature

In order to take the animal's temperature, use a pediatric (flexible tip) digital thermometer. These are much safer and more comfortable than a mercury thermometer. Apply a small amount of Vaseline to the bulb end and gently insert about half way into the pet's anus. Leave the thermometer in until indicated. The thermometer should be almost clean when removed, and abnormalities are indicated by blood, diarrhea, or black, tarry stool. If needed, wipe clean prior to reading the temperature.





Basic First Aid For Pets

The Basic Pet First Aid Kit

Pet First Aid Kit Basic Supplies:

1. Your veterinarian's phone number
2. Phone number of the Poison Control Center
3. Muzzle
4. Gauze pads and Q-tips
5. Gauze roll or bandages and roll of cloth
6. Digital thermometer
7. Tweezers, blunt scissors and pen light
8. Styptic stick, gel or powder
9. Vinyl gloves
10. Hydrogen peroxide
11. Antibiotic ointment
12. Camping, emergency or survival blanket
13. Instant cold pack
14. Eye wash or contact lens solution
15. Large syringe without needle or eyedropper (to give oral treatments)
16. Milk of Magnesia or activated charcoal to absorb poison (Be sure to get the advice of your veterinarian or local poison control center before inducing vomiting or treating an animal for poisoning.)



In the event of poisoning, be sure to get the advice of your veterinarian or local poison control center before inducing vomiting or treating the animal.

Basic First Aid Procedures

All of the following situations require immediate veterinary care!

Fractures

Symptoms: Pain, inability to use a limb, or limb at odd angle

What to do...

Muzzle the pet and look for bleeding. If you can control bleeding without causing more injury, then do so. Watch for signs of shock. If a limb is broken, wrap the leg in cotton padding, then wrap with a magazine, rolled newspaper, towel or two sticks. The splint should extend one joint above the fracture and one joint below. Secure with tape. Make sure the wrap does not constrict blood flow. **DO NOT TRY TO SET THE FRACTURE** by pulling or tugging on the limb. Splint only when necessary and when you are confident of not causing greater injury. If the spine, ribs, hip, etc. appears injured or broken, gently place the animal on the stretcher and immobilize it if possible. Treat the animal for shock. If your pet can't walk, a door, board, blanket, or floor mat can be used as a stretcher to transport injured or weak animals.



Follow-up: Transport the pet to the veterinarian immediately, supporting the injured part as best you can.



Basic First Aid For Pets

Basic First Aid Procedures - continued

All of the following situations require immediate veterinary care!

Bite Wounds

Symptoms: Pain, puncture marks or holes in the skin with or without bleeding.

What to do...

Approach the pet carefully to avoid being bitten. Muzzle the animal. Check the wound for contamination or debris. If significant debris is present, clean the wound with large amounts of saline or water. Wrap large open wounds to keep them clean. Apply pressure to profusely bleeding wounds. Do not use a tourniquet. Wear gloves when possible. Treat the animal for shock.

Follow-up: Call your veterinarian immediately.

Bleeding

Symptoms: An external break in the skin where the blood exits uncontrollably.

What to do...

Apply firm, direct pressure over the bleeding area until the bleeding stops. Hold the pressure for at least 10 straight minutes (continually releasing the pressure to check the wound will hamper the clotting). Avoid bandages that cut off circulation or a tourniquet. A tourniquet is dangerous and should only be used in life-threatening hemorrhaging of a limb. It may result in amputation or disability of the limb. Treat animal for shock.



Follow-up: Call your veterinarian immediately.

Burns (chemical, electrical, or heat - including from a heating pad)

Symptoms: Singed hair, blistering, swelling, redness of skin.

What to do...

Flush the burn immediately with large amounts of cool, running water. However, be sure to wipe off any dry chemicals from the animal's fur before flushing to avoid further irritation. Apply an ice pack for 15-20 minutes. Do not place ice pack directly on the skin. Wrap the pack in a light towel.

Follow-up: Call your veterinarian immediately.

Choking

Symptoms: difficulty breathing, excessive pawing at the mouth, blue lips and tongue.

What to do...

If the animal is still conscious and can still breathe, approach with caution. Look into the mouth to see if foreign object in throat is visible. If you can, clear the airway by removing the object with pliers or



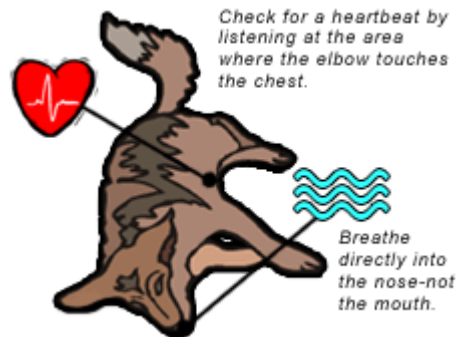
Basic First Aid For Pets

Basic First Aid Procedures - continued

All of the following situations require immediate veterinary care!

tweezers, being careful not to push it farther down the throat. DO NOT PUT YOUR FINGERS IN THE ANIMAL'S MOUTH. If it is lodged too deep or if the pet collapses, then place your hands on both sides of the animal's rib cage and apply firm, quick pressure. Or place the animal on its side and strike the side of the rib cage firmly with the palm of your hand three or four times. Repeat this procedure until the object is dislodged. Keep the animal calm, treat for shock, and get to a veterinarian as quickly as possible.

If an animal is not breathing, place it on a firm surface with its left side up. Check for a heartbeat by listening at the area where the elbow touches the chest. If you hear a heartbeat but not breathing, close the animal's mouth and breathe directly into the nose--not the mouth--until the chest expands. Repeat 12 to 15 times per minute. If there is no pulse, apply heart massage at the same time. The heart is located in the lower half of the chest, behind the elbow of the front left leg. Place one hand below the heart to support the chest. Place other hand over the heart and compress gently. To massage the hearts of cats and other tiny pets, compress the chest with the thumb and forefingers of one hand. Apply heart massage 80-120 times per minute for larger animals and 100-150 per minute for smaller ones. Alternate heart massage with breathing. Treat animal for shock.



Follow-up: Transport the pet to the veterinarian immediately.

Diarrhea

Symptoms: Frequent and many times urgent passage of unformed or liquid stools, often with a foul odor.

What to do...

Withhold food for 12-24 hours, but not water. Sometimes pets that appear to be straining are sore from diarrhea rather than from constipation. Your veterinarian can help you decide which it is and what will help. Trying at-home treatments without knowing the real cause can just make things worse.

Follow-up: Call your veterinarian.

Heatstroke

Symptoms: Rapid or labored breathing, vomiting, high body temperature, collapse.

What to do...

Place the animal in a tub of cool water. If unavailable, gently soak the animal with a garden hose or wrap it in a cool, wet towel. Do not overcool the animal. Stop cooling when rectal temperature reaches 103 degrees Fahrenheit.





Basic First Aid For Pets

Basic First Aid Procedures - continued

All of the following situations require immediate veterinary care!

Follow-up: Call your veterinarian immediately.

Poisoning

Symptoms: Vomiting, convulsions, diarrhea, salivation, weakness, depression, pain.

What to do...

If possible, note what the pet ingested and how much. Immediately call your veterinarian or poison control center. Do not induce vomiting. In case of toxins or chemicals on the skin from oils, paints, insecticides and other contact irritants, request directions on if and how to wash the toxin off.

Follow-up: Call your veterinarian immediately.

Seizures

Symptoms: Salivation, loss of control of urine or stool, violent muscle twitching, loss of consciousness.

What to do...

Move the pet away from any objects that could be harmful during the seizure. Use a blanket for padding and protection. Do not put yourself at risk by restraining the pet during the seizure. Time the seizure - most last only 2 to 3 minutes. After the seizure, keep the animal calm and quiet.

Follow-up: Call your veterinarian immediately.

Vomiting

Symptoms: Expulsion of stomach contents through the mouth.

What to do...

Withhold food for 12-24 hours. Give the pet ice cubes for two hours after vomiting stops, then slowly increase the amount of water and foods given over a 24-hour period.

Follow-up: Call your veterinarian.



*Withhold food for
12-24 hours.*



Basic First Aid For Pets

Basic First Aid Procedures - Restraining An Injured Animal

Restraint Methods

If your pet is injured, you may need to restrain it in order for first aid to be given. Muzzle your pet to restrain it unless it is unconscious, has difficulty breathing or has a mouth injury.

Dogs: Muzzles

Speak and move calmly and quietly, while having someone restrain the dog with a leash. Approach dog from the side and behind its head; do not attempt to put muzzle on from the front. Quickly slip the muzzle over the dog's nose, and secure snugly behind ears. If a muzzle is not available, you can make one from a strip of gauze, rag, necktie, belt or rope about 3 feet long. **DO NOT USE A MUZZLE IN THE CASE OF VOMITING.**



Quickly slip the muzzle over the dog's nose, and secure snugly behind the ears.

Cats: Muzzles

Speak and move calmly and quietly while having someone restrain the cat by holding the scruff of its neck firmly. This does not hurt the cat; but prevents it from moving. Approach the cat from behind and quickly slip a nylon muzzle over the cat's face. Secure snugly behind head. If a muzzle is not available, one can be made with a rag or a strip of gauze. Be sure that it is carefully placed around the cat's mouth and securely fastened. Cats may be difficult to muzzle. A towel placed around the head will help control cats. **DO NOT USE A MUZZLE IN THE CASE OF VOMITING.**

How to Make A Muzzle: Dogs and Cats

If a muzzle is not available, you can make one from a strip of gauze, rag, necktie, belt or rope about 3 feet long (shorter for a cat). Make a large loop in the center and quickly slip over the animal's nose. Bring ends under chin and tie snugly behind it's ears.

Cats: Body Restraint

Most cats can be restrained by holding the scruff of the neck but if necessary, you can wrap cat in a towel. Do this by making sure it's front legs are covered and against the body.



If necessary, you can wrap cat in a towel.



Basic First Aid For Pets

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation - This procedure requires immediate veterinary care.

Pet CPR

If possible, have someone call your veterinarian while you perform CPR.

Step 1: Check For Responsiveness

Before you begin doing anything to your pet, make sure he is truly unresponsive. Check his breathing by placing your hand in front of his nose and mouth. (Be sure not to cover them and block his airway!) Then, check for his heartbeat by placing your ear against area where your pet's left elbow touches the chest.

Step 2: Secure An Airway

If you don't see or feel your pet breathing, you immediately need to make sure his airway is clear. Carefully pull his tongue forward out of his mouth. (Even an unresponsive animal can bite by instinct.) Look into the throat for a foreign object. If you find one, remove it carefully. (See Pet First Aid for instructions on responding to choking in pets.) Then, move the head until the neck is straight. (Don't move the neck if you suspect it is injured.)

Step 3: Rescue Breathing

Close your pet's mouth and breathe directly into his nose not his mouth until his chest expands. If the chest doesn't expand, check again for a foreign object in the throat and reposition the airway so it is straight. Once you've gotten the chest to expand, continue the rescue breathing, repeating the breaths 12 to 15 times per minute (once every four to five seconds).

Step 4: Chest Compressions

Do not begin chest compressions until you've secured an airway and started rescue breathing. Gently lay your pet on his right side.

The heart is located in the lower half of the chest on the left side, behind the elbow of the front left leg. Place one hand below the heart to support the chest; place the other hand over the heart. Then, press down gently on your pet's heart. Press down about one inch for medium-sized dogs; press harder for larger animals and with less force for smaller animals. To massage the hearts of cats and other tiny pets, compress the chest with the thumb and forefingers of one hand.



Press down 80-120 times per minute for larger animals and 100-150 times per minute for smaller ones. Alternate the chest compressions with the rescue breaths. Continue the heart massage compressions and the rescue breathing until you can hear a heartbeat and feel regular breathing. Once your pet is breathing and his heart is beating, call your veterinarian immediately.

What would happen to your pet if something happened to you?

You need a way to let others know that you have a pet who depends on you and who needs care.



The Chance's Spot Pet Emergency Alert Kit includes an Emergency Alert Wallet Card and Emergency Alert Caregiver Instructions to help your pet in an emergency. When used together, the card will let others know you have a friend that depends on you and who needs care and the instructions will allow someone to take care of your pets if you're not able to. As an extra precaution, we also recommend that you keep our Basic Pet First Aid eBook with your Pet Emergency Alert Kit. It's FREE so...

**Download our Pet
Emergency Alert Kit Now!**

chancespot.org/petemergency.html



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