



# Pet First Aid

Always remember that any first aid administered to your pet should be followed by immediate veterinary care. First aid care is not a substitute for veterinary care, but it may save your pet's life until they receive veterinary care.

## **For Your Safety:**

- Never assume that even the gentlest pet will not bite or scratch when injured. Pain and fear can make animals unpredictable and even dangerous.
- Don't attempt to hug an injured pet, and always keep your face away from its mouth. Although your first thought might be to comfort your pet, it might only scare them more or cause them pain.
- Perform any examination slowly and gently. Stop immediately if your pet seems agitated.

## **If Your Pet is Choking:**

- If your pet can still breathe, keep them calm and seek immediate veterinary care.
- Look into your pet's mouth to see if a foreign object is visible. If you see an object, gently try to remove it with pliers or tweezers, but be extremely careful as to not push the object further down the throat. If it is not easy to reach, seek immediate veterinary care.
- If you can't remove the object or your pet collapses, place both hands on the side of your pet's rib cage and apply firm quick pressure or lay your pet on their side and stroke the rib cage firmly with the palm of your hand 3-4 times to sharply push air out of their lungs and push the object out from behind. Repeat this process until the object is dislodged or until you arrive at the vet's office.

## **If Your Pet is Not Breathing:**

- Open your pet's airway by gently grasping its tongue and pulling it forward (out of the mouth) until it is flat. Check the throat to see if there are any foreign objects blocking the airway.

- Perform rescue breathing by holding your pet's mouth closed with your hand and breathing directly into their nose until you see the chest expand. Once the chest expands, continue administering one rescue breath every 4-5 seconds.

### **If Your Pet Has No Heartbeat:**

Do not begin chest compressions until you have secured an airway and started rescue breathing.

- Gently lay your pet on their right side on a firm surface. The heart is located on the left side in the lower half of the chest, just behind the elbow of the front left leg. Place one hand underneath the pet's chest for support and the other hand over the heart.
- For dog's, press down with quick, firm pressure to depress the chest one inch for medium sized dogs. Use more force for larger animals and less force for smaller animals.
- For cats and other small pets, cradle your hand around the animal's chest so your thumb is on the left side of the chest and your fingers are on the right side of the chest, and compress the chest by squeezing it between your thumb and fingers.
- Press down 80-120 times per minute for larger animals and 100-150 times per minute for smaller animals (less than 25 lbs.)
- Alternate the chest compressions with rescue breaths; perform chest compressions for 4-5 seconds and stop long enough to give one rescue breath.
- Continue until you can hear a heartbeat and your pet is breathing regularly, or you have arrived at the veterinary clinic and can take over the resuscitation attempts.

### **If Your Pet's Wound is Bleeding:**

- Apply direct pressure with a clean towel or cloth for at least 3 minutes before checking to see if the bleeding has stopped.
- Severe bleeding can quickly turn life-threatening. Get your animal to a veterinarian immediately if this happens. Add towels on top of previous layers if they are soaking through; but NEVER remove them.

### **If Your Pet is Burned:**

- Apply a muzzle and flush the burn with cool (not cold) water.

### **If Your Pet Has Heatstroke:**

- Place a cool or cold wet towel around your pet's neck and head (do not cover their eyes, nose, or mouth). Remove the towel, wring it out, then rewet and rewrap every few minutes.

- Pour or use a hose to keep cool water running over the animal's body (especially the abdomen and between the hind legs). Then, use your hand to sweep the water away as it absorbs the heat.

#### **If Your Pet is Poisoned:**

- If you know or suspect your pet has consumed something that may be harmful, call your veterinarian, emergency clinic, or the Animal Poison Control Center (888-426-4435)
- If possible, have the following information available:
  - Species, breed, age, sex, weight, number of animals involved.
  - Symptoms
  - Name/Description of the substance that is in question
    - The amount consumed/exposed to
    - How long it has been since your pet was exposed to it
  - Collect any material your pet may have vomited or chewed, and place it in a plastic sealable bag to take with you when you bring your animal in.
  - Do not try to induce vomiting or give any medication to your pet unless directed to do so by your veterinarian or Poison Control.

#### **If Your Pet is Having Seizures:**

- Clear the area of other pets, furniture, and any other objects that may cause injury.
- Do not try to restrain your pet or try to startle them out of their seizure.
- Time the seizure (they usually last about 2-3 minutes)
- After the seizure has stopped, keep your pet warm and quiet.

#### **If Your Pet is Injured:**

- If possible, and safe, try to stabilize injuries before moving an injured animal by splinting or bandaging them. Keep in mind, that a poorly applied bandage or splint can do more harm than good.
- If there is a foreign object in the wound, do not remove it. If necessary, carefully cut it short without moving it to leave 3-6 inches sticking out before transporting to the veterinarian.

### **Pet First Aid Kit Checklist:**

Keep a kit of basic first aid supplies for the pets in your household. Many items in a family first aid kit can be used for pets too.

- **Important Phone Numbers:** Veterinarian, Emergency Clinic, Poison Control, Animal Control, Non-Emergency Police.
- A copy of your **pet's medical records.**
- **Muzzle:** to prevent bites (DO NOT muzzle if your pet is vomiting)
- **Spare Leash & Collar**
- **Gauze Roll:** for wrapping wounds
- **Nonstick Bandages or Strips of Clean Cloth:** to control bleeding.
- **Adhesive Tape:** for securing bandages.
- **Milk of Magnesia or Activated Charcoal:** to absorb poison. (Use only if instructed to do so by your veterinarian or a poison control center)
- **3% Hydrogen Peroxide:** to induce vomiting. (Always contact your veterinarian or poison control before inducing vomiting; do not use on wounds)
- **Saline Solution:** for cleaning wounds

### **Important Phone Numbers & Information:**

- **Poison Control: 888-426-4435**
- **Closest Emergency Clinics:**
  - Northway Animal Emergency Clinic
    - 35 Fawn Road Gansevoort NY 12831

- Friday-Sunday: 8am-8pm
- 518-761-2602
- o Capital District Veterinarian Referral Hospital
  - 222 Troy Schenectady Road Latham NY 12110
  - 24 Hours
  - 518-785-1094