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<http://www.pulaskiveterinaryclinic.com/?111150>

http://www.healthypet.com/PetCare/PetCareArticle.aspx?title=Pet_First_Aid

<http://www.veterinarypartner.com/Content.plx?P=SRC&S=1&SourceID=20>

<http://www.aspc.org/Pet-care/dog-care/dog-care-emergency-care>

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Pet First Aid



At some point in all pets' lives, there is likely to be an instance in which they will require immediate, emergency care. Whether traumatic injury, onset of acute illness, or sudden worsening of a chronic condition, responsible pet owners should have at least basic knowledge of pet first aid and a first aid kit at the ready, equipped with essential supplies and information.

BE PREPARED! Advance planning helps minimize panic and avoid wasting precious seconds that could be life-saving for your pet.

Pet first aid is a tool to help you give *immediate and temporary* aid to a sick or injured animal until you can transport the animal to a professional. Your goal is to protect both yourself and the animal from further harm. Provide first aid only if it safe to do so.

Know What's Normal

External injuries such as bites, wounds, burns, and hot spots display physical signs that are often relatively easy to identify. Some internal illnesses, infections, and conditions may also display clear symptoms (e.g., vomiting, diarrhea, odor, choking, weakness, lethargy) while others can be more difficult to detect. There are five vital signs that indicate whether an animal is in a normal, healthy state or experiencing illness, pain, or distress. Vital signs above or below normal ranges signal an emergency requiring professional medical attention.

- 1) *Pulse Rates.* Measured in beats per minute (Bpm), normal rates are:
Small dogs (<30 lbs) – 100-160 Bpm
Medium/large dogs – 60-100 Bpm
The heartbeat can be felt at the point where the left elbow touches the chest and the pulse can be felt on the inner thigh, just below the wrist, and just below the ankle.
- 2) *Body Temperatures.* Normal body temperature ranges are:
Dogs – 100.2-102.8°F
- 3) *Mucous Membrane Color.* Mucous membranes are soft tissues that line body cavities exposed to the external environment and internal organs, and include the eyes, ears, nostrils, lips, gums, genitals, and

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anus. Their normal color is pink. Mucous membranes that appear pale, blue, yellow, white, brick red, or brown signal an emergency. To check coloration, lift the animal's upper lip or pull down on the lower lip, or gently lower the eyelid.

- 4) *Capillary Refill Time*. Pressing lightly on the gums or inner lip for a few seconds until the tissue turns white and then releasing allows you to gauge how long it takes for the capillaries feeding the area to refill and return the tissue to a normal, pink color. Normal refill time is one to two seconds. Refill time of less than one second or greater than three seconds indicates an emergency situation.
- 5) *Hydration*. Adequate hydration is essential to the survival of all biological creatures. To test for dehydration, pull up the skin at the back of the neck and release. Normally, the skin should spring back in one to two seconds. Longer than two to three seconds indicates dehydration and requires immediate emergency attention. Hydration can be more difficult to assess in old or very thin/fat animals. Alternatively, check the gums: dry or sticky gums indicate dehydration.

Recognize an Emergency

You know your pet best! Always check for and be alert to unusual noises, sights, smells, and behaviors. If you observe or suspect an illness, injury, or other potential emergency, reach out immediately to professionals for help. Call your vet, a 24-hour emergency clinic, the National Animal Poison Control Center, or the Humane Society.

Transporting an Injured or Ill Animal

The first rule of thumb is to keep yourself safe. Injured or ailing creatures may perceive your attempts to aid them as a threat and seek to protect themselves from further harm by biting or other aggressive behavior. Muzzle your pet if necessary, but not if s/he is vomiting or coughing. If you need to carry your pet, pick up the animal up with the injury toward your body.

Remember: Pet first aid can help you give *immediate and temporary* aid to a sick or injured animal. But your goal should always be to get the animal as quickly and safely as possible into the care of a professional.

Written by Carole Peeler and Paula Dietz

Pet First Aid Kit

Items to add to a purchased kit to make it specific & more useful to your pet

Supplies:

- Digital thermometer
- Penlight
- Self-adherent wrap (Vet Wrap)
- Nail clipper
- Benadryl (talk to your vet re: safety/dosage)
- Calculator

Information:

- Phone numbers:
 - Your vet
 - 24-hour emergency clinic
 - National Animal Poison Control Center 800-548-2424//900-680-0000
- Normal vital signs of your dog
- Photos of pets
- Current shot records