

QUICK REFERENCE - FIRST AID FOR PETS

Bite Wounds & Bleeding

Approach the animal carefully. Once you are up close, muzzle the animal. Inspect the wound. Make sure there is no dirt or debris in the wound. If necessary remove carefully with a pair of plastic tweezers. Clean the wound with a saline or balanced electrolyte solution. If not available, use water. If the wound is bleeding excessively, apply pressure (at least 10 minutes) directly to the wound to stop the bleeding. Large wounds can be wrapped, to keep clean. When using bandages, make sure that it is not wound so tight, that it cuts off circulation. Bandages should be wrapped firmly, but not too tightly.

Heat Stroke

Place the animal in a tub of water or wrap in a wet cloth or gently soak animal with garden hose. Continue till rectal temperature is 39 degrees Celsius. Do not over cool the animal.

Diarrhoea

Don't feed your animal for 12 – 24 hours, but give plenty of fresh water. Home remedies can sometimes make it worse, so take your pet to the Veterinarian if it persists after the 12 – 24 hour period.

Shock

When an animal has ANY injuries, they can go in shock. Symptoms – irregular breathing, dilated pupils. Keep the animal gently restrained, calm, warm and his lower body elevated.

Burns

Flush the burn immediately with cool running water and apply an icepack wrapped in a towel for 15 – 20 minutes. If the animal was burned with dried chemicals, brush it off first before flushing the burn area with water.

Poisoning

Symptoms – vomiting, convulsions, diarrhoea, salivation, weakness, depression, pain. Try and find out what and how much the animal ate. Call the Poison Crisis Centre (021 931 6129) or your Veterinarian. Do NOT induce vomiting.

Fractures

Muzzle the pet and look for bleeding. If you can stop the bleeding without harming the animal further, do so. Take the animal to the Veterinarian supporting the injured area. Do NOT try and set the fracture by pulling at the limb.

Vomiting

Don't feed your animal 12 – 24 hours. Give ice cubes 2 hours after the vomiting stops.

Seizures

Symptoms – salivation, loss of control of urine or stool, violent muscle twitching, loss of consciousness. Move the animal away from any objects that can cause harm during the seizure – use a blanket for padding and protection. Do NOT try and restrain the animal during the seizure. Time the seizure; they take 2 – 3 minutes. After the seizure, keep the animal calm and take him to the veterinarian.

Breathing Stops & Choking

Make sure the animal's airway is not blocked by a foreign object. If you can, carefully remove the object with a pair of tweezers being careful not to push it deeper into the animal's throat. If it is lodged too deeply, place your hands on both sides of the rib cage and apply firm, quick pressure or place the animal on its side and strike the side of the ribcage firmly 3 – 4 times until the object is dislodged. If the animal can partially breathe, keep the animal still and calm and take it to the Vet as soon as possible. Place the animal on a firm surface with its left side up. Place your ear on the animal's chest where the elbow is attached to listen for a heartbeat. If you hear a heartbeat, but no breathing, close the animal's mouth and blow into the nose until the chest expands. Repeat this 12 – 15 times per minute. If there is no pulse, massage the animal's heart while doing resuscitation. The heart is located in the lower half of the chest, behind the elbow of the front left leg. Place your one hand below the heart to support the chest and place your other hand over the heart compressing gently. For smaller animals, compress with your 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. With bigger animals get someone to help you if possible.