



"Critical Care For Your Pet"
Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

603.642.9111

**Veterinary Emergency &
Surgery Hospital**

of Brentwood

Basic First Aid

The following situations generally require veterinary attention. These tips are designed to help you stabilize your pet while veterinary help is being obtained.

- **Bleeding**
 - Arterial bleeding is an immediately life-threatening situation. Arterial blood will be bright red, will bleed in "spurts," will be difficult to stop, and requires immediate veterinary attention.
 - For *any* type of bleeding, place a clean cloth or sterile gauze over the area.
 - Apply direct pressure for at least 5 to 7 minutes to stop bleeding.

Note: Do not apply tourniquet unless absolutely necessary
- **Loss of consciousness**
 - In case of drowning, clear lungs of fluid. Lift animal's hindquarters high over head and squeeze chest firmly until fluid stops draining.
 - In case of electrical shock, DO NOT touch the pet until it is no longer in contact with electricity source.
 - In case of airway obstruction, the object will need to be gently removed. See "Choking."
 - If animal is not breathing and has no pulse, start CPR.
- **Vomiting**
 - Examine vomit for blood or other clues as to cause.
 - If poisoning is suspected, bring a sample of the suspected poison, preferably in its original packaging, to the veterinarian.
 - Gently press on stomach to detect any abdominal pain.
 - Withhold all food and water until a veterinarian has been consulted.

Note: Abdominal pain, enlarged stomach, and unproductive vomiting are serious signs. Call veterinarian immediately.
- **Choking**
 - Gently pull tongue forward and inspect mouth and throat.
 - If a foreign object is spotted, hold the mouth open and attempt to remove it by hand or with tweezers or a pair of small pliers. Take care not to push the object farther down the animal's throat.
- **Heat Stroke**
 - Place in cool or shaded area
 - Immediately bathe animal with tepid water (do not leave pet unattended while soaking even if conscious). Never use cold water.
 - Monitor rectal temperature. When temperature drops to 103°F, dry pet.
 - Continue monitoring temperature and transport to veterinary clinic immediately.

Note: Do not allow animal to become excessively chilled as this will also cause life-threatening complications
- **Limping**
 - Attempt to localize injury through gentle inspection.
 - Once localized, examine affected area to check for pain, heat, injury, and swelling.
 - If a fracture is suspected, gently stabilize limb for transport. See "Handling and Transporting Tips."
 - Cover any wounds with a clean cloth. See "Bleeding."
- **Bee or Wasp Sting**
 - Bee stings are acid; neutralize with baking soda.
 - Wasp stings are alkaline; neutralize with vinegar or lemon juice.
 - Apply cold pack.
 - Apply calamine or antihistamine cream.
 - In case of severe swelling or difficulty breathing, transport to veterinary clinic immediately.
- **Tips for Handling / Transporting**
 - Don't assume a pet won't bite or scratch.
 - Don't try to comfort an injured pet by hugging it. Don't put your face near its head.
 - Muzzle dogs if necessary with gauze, soft towel strips, or stockings. Wrap cats or other small animals in a towel.
 - Perform any examinations slowly and gently. Stop if the pet becomes agitated.
 - Don't attempt to lift or drag a large injured dog. Improvise a stretcher out of a board, throw rug, child's plastic toboggan, etc.
 - Before transport, try to stabilize injuries. Rolled magazines or newspapers can serve as impromptu splints. Pad limb and splint generously with rolled cotton and gauze if on hand, or improvise with suitable pillows, pieces of blanket, towels, etc. Make sure splint immobilizes joints above and below injury.