



## **Basic First Aid**

Accidents do happen and while most of the following situations will require veterinary assistance, there are things that you can do to stabilize your pet until professional help is available.

### **Bleeding**

- Arterial bleeding is an immediately life-threatening situation; arterial blood is bright red, bleeds in “spurts,” is difficult to stop, and requires immediate veterinary attention
- For any type of bleeding, place a clean cloth or sterile gauze over the affected area
- Apply direct pressure for at least 5 to 7 minutes to stop the bleeding

*Do not apply a tourniquet unless absolutely necessary*

### **Loss of consciousness**

- In case of drowning, clear lungs of fluid: lift the animal’s hindquarters high over its head and firmly squeeze the chest until fluid stops draining
- In case of electrical shock, **DO NOT TOUCH** the animal unless you are sure it is no longer in contact with the electricity source
- In case of airway obstruction, attempt to remove the object; see [Choking](#)
- If the animal is not breathing and has no pulse, begin CPR

### **Choking**

- Gently pull the tongue forward and inspect the mouth and throat
- If a foreign object is spotted, hold the mouth open and attempt to remove the object by hand or with tweezers or a pair of small pliers—take care not to push the object farther down the animal’s throat

### **Vomiting**

- Examine the vomit for blood or foreign objects
- Gently press on the stomach to see if there is any abdominal pain
- Withhold all food and water until a veterinarian has been consulted
- **If poisoning is suspected, bring a sample of the suspected poison—preferably in its original packaging—to the veterinarian**

*Abdominal pain, enlarged stomach, and unproductive vomiting are indicative of serious conditions; seek veterinarian assistance immediately.*

## **Heat Stroke**

- Symptoms include:
  - heavy panting
  - difficulty breathing
  - tongue and mucous membranes appear bright red
  - thickened saliva
  - vomiting
  - rectal temperature of 104° to 110°F (40° to 43.3°C)
  - unsteady
  - diarrhea
  - collapse
  - seizures
- Bring the animal to a cool or shaded area
- Immediately bathe the animal with tepid water; NEVER USE COLD WATER
- Monitor rectal temperature; when it drops to 103°F, dry the animal
- Continue to monitor the animal's temperature and bring it to the hospital as soon as possible

*Do not leave the animal unattended while soaking even if conscious*

*Do not allow the animal to become excessively chilled as this can cause life-threatening complications*

## **Limping**

- Attempt to locate the injury through gentle inspection
- Once located, examine the area for pain, heat, injury, and swelling
- If a fracture is suspected, gently stabilize limb for transport; see Transporting an injured pet
- Cover any wounds with a clean cloth; see Bleeding

## **Bee or Wasp Sting**

- Bee stings are acidic and can be neutralized with baking soda
- Wasp stings are alkaline and can be neutralized with vinegar or lemon juice
- Apply a cold pack
- Apply calamine or antihistamine cream to the sting area
- In case of severe swelling or difficulty breathing, immediately bring the animal to the hospital