



## **Valley View Pet Hospital**

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### **Pet First Aid**

Being prepared is the most important factor, when your pet has an emergency,. Before an emergency strikes, be sure you know how your veterinarian handles emergencies or where you should go if you have one. Valley View Pet Hospital clients uses South Metro Emergency Animal Care in Apple Valley for after hours emergencies and your vet probably uses a similar service. You can also stay prepared for emergencies by putting together a pet first-aid kit.

#### **First Aid Kit**

- Phone numbers: Valley View (952-432-9661), After hours (952-953-3737)
- Gauze to wrap wounds or muzzle pet
- Adhesive tape for bandages
- Nonstick bandages (i.e., Telfa pads, feminine pads) to protect wounds or control bleeding
- Towels, cloth and old socks to cover wounds (clean)
- Hydrogen peroxide (3 percent)
- Milk of Magnesia or activated charcoal to absorb poison (Be sure to get the advice of your veterinarian or poison control center before inducing vomiting or treating a pet for poisoning.)
- Large syringe without needle, or plastic eyedropper (to give oral treatments)

- Muzzle (soft cloth, rope, necktie or nylon stocking) or use a towel to cover a small pet's head. Do not use in case of vomiting.
- Stretcher (A door, board, blanket or floor mat)
- Benadryl 25mg tablets (to be given as directed by vet in case of allergic reaction)
- Saline Solution for rinsing eyes
- Electronic rectal thermometer
- Vaseline
- Bandage Scissors
- Tweezers and/or hemostat
- Space Blanket
- Ziplocs (for samples of ingested items)
- Small flashlight
- Ice Pack
- 6 foot length of rope

***Remember: In an emergency, first aid is not a substitute for veterinary treatment.*** However, before you are able to get your pet to a veterinarian, knowing some basic first aid can help. Always seek veterinary care following first-aid attempts.

### **Bite Wounds**

#### *Treatment/Action*

Approach the pet carefully to avoid getting bitten. Muzzle the pet. Check the wound for contamination or debris. If significant debris is present, then clean the wound with large amounts of saline or balanced electrolyte solution. If these are not available, then regular water may be used. Wrap large open wounds to keep them clean. Apply pressure to profusely bleeding wounds. Do not use a tourniquet. Wear gloves when possible.

Bite wounds often become infected and need professional care. Call your veterinarian.

## **Bleeding**

### *Treatment/Action*

If there is a foreign object in the wound, do not remove it, because you might cause further injury to structures beneath. Apply firm, direct pressure over the bleeding area until the bleeding stops. Hold the pressure for at least 10 straight minutes (continually releasing the pressure to check the wound will hamper the clotting). Avoid bandages that cut off circulation.

Call your veterinarian immediately.

## **Eyes**

Goal: To assess and care for traumatic and medical emergencies of the eye until a Veterinarian and more advanced care can be reached. Eye problems should always be treated as emergencies as the eye is very fragile and can quickly become irreparably damaged.

Assessment of the eye: Aside from obvious lacerations and ruptures of the eyeball most emergencies will present with similar clinical signs. The eye(s) will appear red and inflamed and there will be discharge ranging from clear fluid to cloudy green. Causes can range from infections and foreign material and caustic substances in the eye to non-apparent scratches and ulcers on the cornea.

### **Eye inflamed or irritated**

- If the integrity of the eye is compromised in any way (ruptured or torn) place a gauze sponge moistened with saline solution over the eye and transport immediately.
- If the eye appears intact then examine the eye for any foreign particles that can be easily removed with the corner of a moistened 2x2-gauze square.
- Next rinse the eye copiously with saline solution from the squirt bottle.
- If possible keep a towel over the pets head during transport to block out light that may increase pain.

### **Eye Prolapsed (bugged out)**

This can happen in smushed face dogs like Pugs and Boston terriers.

#### *Treatment/ Action*

Rinse the eye with saline solution (used for contact lenses) to clean off excess debris. Cover with a soft cloth soaked in saline then cover this with a small plastic bag to retain moisture.

Transport to a Veterinarian immediately.

### **Breathing Stops**

#### *Treatment/Action*

Check to see if the pet is choking on a foreign object (see **Choking**). If an pet is not breathing, place it on a firm surface with its left side up. Check for a heartbeat by listening at the area where the elbow touches the chest. If you hear a heartbeat but not breathing, close the pet's mouth and breathe directly into its nose--not the mouth--until the chest expands. Repeat 12 to 15 times per minute. If there is no pulse, apply heart massage at the same time. The heart is located in the lower half of the chest, behind the elbow of the front left leg. Place one hand below the heart to support the chest. Place other hand over the heart and compress gently. To massage the hearts of cats and other tiny pets, compress the chest with the thumb and forefingers of one hand. Apply heart massage 80-120 times per minute for larger pets and 100-150 per minute for smaller ones. Alternate heart massage with breathing.

Please note: Even in the hands of well-trained veterinary health professionals, the success of resuscitation is very low overall. Success may be slightly higher in the cases of drowning or electrical shock.

Call your veterinarian immediately.

### **Burns** (chemical, electrical, or heat sources including from a heating pad)

*Symptoms:* singed hair, blistering, swelling, redness of skin

#### *Treatment/Action*

Flush the burn immediately with large amounts of cool, running water. Apply an ice pack for 15-20 minutes. Do not place an ice pack directly on the skin. Wrap the pack in a light towel or other cover. If the

pet has large quantities of dry chemicals on its skin, brush them off. Water may activate some dry chemicals. Never apply ointment or cream of any kind to a fresh burn.

Call your veterinarian immediately.

### **Choking**

*Symptoms:* difficulty breathing, excessive pawing at the mouth, blue lips and tongue

#### *Treatment/Action*

Be sure to protect yourself as well as the pet, as the pet will likely be frantic and may be more likely to bite.

If the pet can still partially breathe, it's best to keep the pet calm and get to a veterinarian as quickly as possible. Look into the mouth to see if foreign object in throat is visible. If you can, clear the airway by removing the object with pliers or tweezers, being careful not to push it farther down the throat. If it is lodged too deep or if the pet collapses, then place your hands on both sides of the pet's rib cage and apply firm, quick pressure. Or place the pet on its side and strike the side of the rib cage firmly with the palm of your hand three or four times. Repeat this procedure until the object is dislodged or you arrive at the veterinarian's office.

Call your veterinarian immediately (see **Breathing**).

### **Diarrhea**

#### *Treatment/Action*

Withhold food for 12-24 hours, but not water. Sometimes pets that appear to be straining are sore from diarrhea rather than from constipation. Your veterinarian can help you decide which it is and what will help. Trying at-home treatments without knowing the real cause can just make things worse.

Call your veterinarian.

### **Fractures**

*Symptoms:* Pain, inability to use a limb, or limb at odd angle

#### *Treatment/Action*

Muzzle the pet and look for bleeding. If you can control bleeding without causing more injury, then do so.

Watch for signs of shock. **DO NOT TRY TO SET THE FRACTURE** by pulling or tugging on the limb.

Transport the pet to the veterinarian immediately, supporting the injured part as best you can.

### **Heatstroke**

*Symptoms:* Body temperature greater than 103 F, gums that are bright red and dry or tacky, rapid panting, vomiting, diarrhea, and decreased level of consciousness.

#### *Action:*

- If the pet is not conscious, follow CPR procedures and then continue below.
- Move the pet to a cool, shady area.
- If there is no vomiting, offer repeated small amounts of water.
- If the pet's temperature is greater than 104 F then immerse in cool water or spray down and fan to dissipate heat. Recheck temperature often, cooling too far can present many more dangers. Stop when pet's temperature is less than 104 F.
- Seek Veterinary care immediately.

### **Poisoning**

*Symptoms:* vomiting, convulsions, diarrhea, salivation, weakness, depression, pain, evidence of ingestion

#### *Treatment/Action*

Record what the pet ingested and how much. Save the label. Immediately call your veterinarian or poison control center (**ASPCA National Animal Poison Control Center — 888-426-4435**). Do not induce vomiting unless directed to do so by a Vet. In case of toxins or chemicals on the skin from oils, paints, insecticides and other contact irritants, request directions on if you should and how to wash the toxin off.

### **Seizures**

*Symptoms:* salivation, loss of control of urine or stool, violent muscle twitching, loss of consciousness

#### *Treatment/Action*

Move the pet away from any objects that could be harmful during the seizure. Use a blanket for padding and protection. Do not put yourself at risk by restraining the pet during the seizure. Time the seizure. They usually last only 2 to 3 minutes. Afterwards, keep the pet calm and quiet.

Call your veterinarian immediately.

### **Shock**

*Symptoms:* irregular breathing, dilated pupils

*Treatment/Action*

Shock may occur as a result of a serious injury or fright. Keep the pet gently restrained, quiet, and warm, with the lower body elevated.

Call your veterinarian immediately.

### **Vomiting**

*Treatment/Action*

Withhold food for 12-24 hours. If vomiting remains frequent or has not stopped within 12 hours bring in to your veterinarian. Give the pet ice cubes for two hours after vomiting stops, then slowly increase the amount of water and foods given over a 24-hour period.

Call your veterinarian.

### **If you need to muzzle your pet**

Use a strip of soft cloth, rope, necktie, or nylon stocking. Wrap around the nose, under the chin and tie behind the ears. Care must be taken when handling weak or injured pets. Even normally docile pets will bite when in pain. Allow the pet to pant after handling by loosening or removing the muzzle. Do not use a muzzle in a case of vomiting. Cats and small pets may be difficult to muzzle. A towel placed around the head will help control small pets.

**If your pet can't walk**

A door, board, blanket, or floor mat can be used as a stretcher to transport injured or weak pets.

*If your pet's emergency is not covered here, please call your veterinarian immediately.*