

**Animal First Aid**

**Poisoning:**

If you know your pet has consumed something that may be harmful, or if the animal is having seizures, losing consciousness, is unconscious or is having difficulty breathing, telephone your veterinarian, emergency veterinary clinic or the [Animal Poison Control Center](http://www.aspca.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control) hotline (**888.426.4435** – available 365 days/year, 24 hours/day) immediately. There is a fee for the consultation.

If possible, have the following information available:

* Species, breed, age, sex, weight and number of animals involved.
* Symptoms.
* Name/description of the substance that is in question; the amount the animal was exposed to; and the length of time of the exposure (how long it's been since your pet ate it or was exposed to it).
* Have the product container/packaging available for reference.

Collect any material your pet may have vomited or chewed, and place it in a plastic sealable bag to take with you when you bring your animal in for veterinary treatment.

**Common foods** **that may be dangerous** to dogs include garlic, onion, grapes, raisins, mushrooms, meat with bones, yeast dough, chocolate, sugar, xylitol (sugar substitute often found in reduced calorie/reduced fat peanut butter), gum, avocado, and fruit with seeds.

**Seizures:**

* Keep your pet away from any objects (including furniture) that might hurt it. Do not try to restrain the pet.
* Time the seizure (they usually last 2-3 minutes).
* After the seizure has stopped, keep your pet as warm and quiet as possible and contact your veterinarian.

**Fractures:**

* Muzzle your pet.
* Gently lay your pet on a flat surface for support.
* While transporting your injured pet to a veterinarian, use a stretcher (you can use a board or other firm surface as a stretcher, or use a throw rug or blanket as a sling). If possible, secure the pet to the stretcher (make sure you don't put pressure on the injured area or the animal's chest) for transport—this may be as simple as wrapping a blanket around them.
* You can attempt to set the fracture with a homemade splint, but remember that a badly-placed splint may cause more harm than good. If in doubt, it is always best to leave the bandaging and splinting to a veterinarian.

**Bleeding:**

* Muzzle your pet.
* Press a clean, thick gauze pad over the wound, and keep pressure over the wound with your hand until the blood starts clotting. This will often take several minutes for the clot to be strong enough to stop the bleeding. Instead of checking it every few seconds to see if it has clotted, hold pressure on it for a minimum of 3 minutes and then check it.
* If bleeding is severe and on the legs, apply a tourniquet (using an elastic band or gauze) between the wound and the body, and apply a bandage and pressure over the wound. Loosen the tourniquet for 20 seconds every 15-20 minutes. Severe bleeding can quickly be life-threatening—get your animal to a veterinarian *immediately* if this occurs.
* Internal bleeding symptoms: bleeding from nose, mouth, rectum, coughing up blood, blood in urine, pale gums, collapse, weak and rapid pulse.
  + Keep animal as warm and quiet as possible and transport immediately to a veterinarian.

**Burns:**

* Chemical
  + Muzzle the animal.
  + Flush burn immediately with large quantities of water.
* Severe
  + Muzzle the animal.
  + Quickly apply ice water compress to burned area.

**Choking:**

* Symptoms: difficulty breathing, excessive pawing at the mouth, choking sounds when breathing or coughing, blue-tinged lips/tongue/gums.
* Use caution – a choking pet is more likely to bite in its panic.
* If the pet can still breathe, keep it calm and get it to a veterinarian.
* Look into the pet's mouth to see if a foreign object is visible. If you see an object, gently try to remove it with pliers or tweezers, but be careful not to push the object further down the throat. Don't spend a lot of time trying to remove it if it's not easy to reach—don't delay, and get your pet to a veterinarian immediately.
* If you can't remove the object or your pet collapses, place both hands on the side of your pet's rib cage and apply firm quick pressure, or lay your pet on its side and strike the rib cage firmly with the palm of your hand 3-4 times. The idea behind this is to sharply push air out of their lungs and push the object out from behind. Keep repeating this until the object is dislodged or until you arrive at the veterinarian's office.

**Heatstroke:**

* ***Never*** leave your pet in the car on warm days. The temperature inside a car can rise very quickly to dangerous levels, even on milder days. Pets can succumb to heatstroke very easily and must be treated very quickly to give them the best chance of survival.
* If you can’t immediately get your pet to a vet, move to a shaded area out of direct sunlight.
* Place a cool or cold, wet towel around its neck and head (do not cover your pet's eyes, nose or mouth). Change the towel every few minutes.
* Pour or use a hose to keep water running over the animal's body (especially the abdomen and between the hind legs), and use your hands to massage its legs and sweep the water away as it absorbs the body heat.
* Transport the pet to a veterinarian as soon as possible.

**Diarrhea/Vomiting:**

* If more than every 6 hours, has moderate blood in it, occurs with vomiting, lasts longer than 24 hours, or if pet is lethargic/dehydrated or not eating, take pet to vet.
* Diarrhea--you can add canned pumpkin, boiled white rice, yogurt with culturelle, and/or boiled chicken into the normal diet (half and half) to assists in digestion.
* Vomiting--remove all food and water for about 4-6 hours. If the vomiting continues, the pet acts ill, or is bloated, seek veterinary attention. If no vomiting occurs for 4 to 6 hours, begin to frequently give small amounts of water.
  + A rule of thumb is to give 1 teaspoon per pound of body weight every 2 or 3 hours throughout the day and night.
  + Isolate the sick pet from other pets.
* If your pet does not vomit the fluid for about 2-3 hours, offer a small amount of their normal diet. If they keep this down for 30 minutes, they can have small but frequent meals of their normal diet. Also ok to add foods for diarrhea. If your pet does not want to eat, or starts to vomit, go to the vet for medical care.

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| Phone numbers and your pet's medical record (including medications and vaccination history)  **Veterinarian:**  **Emergency veterinary clinic:**  **Animal Poison Control Center:** 888-4ANI-HELP (888-426-4435) *(there may be a fee for this call)* | Know these numbers before you need them. If you do not know the number of the emergency clinic in your area, ask your veterinarian. |
| https://www.avma.org/public/EmergencyCare/PublishingImages/uncheck.pngGauze | For wrapping wounds or muzzling the injured animal. |
| https://www.avma.org/public/EmergencyCare/PublishingImages/uncheck.pngNonstick bandages, towels, or strips of clean cloth | To control bleeding or protect wounds. |
| https://www.avma.org/public/EmergencyCare/PublishingImages/uncheck.pngAdhesive tape for bandages   **\*Do NOT use human adhesive bandages (eg, Band-Aids®) on pets** | For securing the gauze wrap or bandage. |
| https://www.avma.org/public/EmergencyCare/PublishingImages/uncheck.pngMilk of magnesia Activated charcoal | To absorb poison *Always* contact your veterinarian or local poison control center *before* inducing vomiting or treating an animal for poison. |
| https://www.avma.org/public/EmergencyCare/PublishingImages/uncheck.pngHydrogen peroxide (3%) | To induce vomiting *Always* contact your veterinarian or local poison control center *before* inducing vomiting or treating an animal for poison. |
| https://www.avma.org/public/EmergencyCare/PublishingImages/uncheck.pngDigital Thermometer —you will need a "fever" thermometer because the temperature scale of regular thermometers doesn't go high enough for pets | To check your pet's temperature. Do *not* insert a thermometer in your pet's mouth—the temperature must be taken rectally. |
| https://www.avma.org/public/EmergencyCare/PublishingImages/uncheck.pngEye dropper (or large syringe without needle) | To give oral treatments or flush wounds. |
| https://www.avma.org/public/EmergencyCare/PublishingImages/uncheck.pngMuzzle (in an emergency a rope, necktie, soft cloth, nylon stocking, small towel may be used) | To cover your pet's head. If your pet is vomiting, do *not* muzzle it! |
| https://www.avma.org/public/EmergencyCare/PublishingImages/uncheck.pngLeash | To transport your pet (if your pet is capable of walking without further injury.) |
| https://www.avma.org/public/EmergencyCare/PublishingImages/uncheck.pngStretcher (in an emergency a door, board, blanket or floor mat may be used) | To stabilize the injured animal and prevent further injury during transport. |

<https://www.avma.org/public/EmergencyCare/Pages/Basic-Pet-First-Aid-Procedures.aspx>