

# Tips for Emergency Situations

By Dr. Sarah

## 1. Be Prepared

- a. Keep phone numbers and directions to local veterinarian and/or emergency clinic in a conspicuous place. A vaccination and medical history should also be handy. Let everyone in the house know where this information is kept.

### **National Animal Poison Control Center (NAPPC) of the University of Illinois:**

800-548-2423

(a fee of \$30 applies for this call)

### **ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center:**

888-4ANI-HELP (888-426-4435)

(a fee of \$65 applies for this call)

- b. Maintain a list of basic first aid supplies:
  - i. Wound care: gauze, non stick bandages, adhesive tape
  - ii. Poisoning supplies: milk of magnesia, activated charcoal, hydrogen peroxide. Always contact your veterinarian or poison control center before inducing vomiting or treating an animal for poison.
  - iii. Muzzle – do not use if your pet is vomiting
  - iv. Leash
  - v. Backboard or support device (table leaf, ironing board, etc.)

## 2. Reasons to seek immediate care for your animal include:

- a. profuse, bloody diarrhea or continuous vomiting
- b. abdominal swelling, restless behavior or retching (esp. in large breed dogs)
- c. an inability to urinate (any species)
- d. consumption of poison, such as rat bait or antifreeze
- e. trauma, such as hit by car or injuries sustained from another animal (such as a deep bite wound, etc.)
- f. breathing problems, such as shortness of breath, extending head or neck to breathe, or wheezing
- g. seizures, convulsions or fainting
- h. eye problems, such as foreign objects in the eye, loss of vision, squinting or sudden appearance of cloudiness in the eye

Always remember that any first aid administered to your pet should be followed by immediate veterinary care. First aid care is not a substitute for veterinary care, but swift and informed action immediately after an emergency may help to save your pet's life until he or she can receive veterinary treatment.

Source for the majority of information: AVMA

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