

Heat stroke

Signs may include excessive panting, disorientation, collapse or seizures

- Wet towels with cold water and apply them to less hairy parts of the body such as under the front and back legs and over the abdomen. Change the towels as they begin to warm.
- Create an airflow either using a fan or an open window in a moving car.
- Avoid completely submerging your animal in water this may lead to more problems



Bandaging guide

A step by step approach to a simple foot bandage
(photos show step by step guide to putting on foot bandage)



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Golden Rules

- Be prepared – keep your first aid kit organised and up to date.
- Don't panic at the first sign of a problem, try and remain calm and be logical in your approach
- Know when to seek further help – minor problems may often be dealt with at home but if in any doubt consult your vet



XLVets Small Animal member veterinary practices work together to share experience, knowledge and ideas to ensure the highest levels of quality and care for their client's pets. XLVet member practices provide a compassionate and caring service for all pets and at the same time offer comprehensive and up-to-date treatment in all fields of veterinary medicine and surgery.



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FIRST AID FOR CATS AND DOGS



First aid as the name suggests is the first treatment you would give when presented with an injury or traumatic episode. We all hope that our pets will never be in the situation where it is needed however the preparation of a basic first aid kit and some tips on how to handle situations may make dealing with an emergency much easier.

Basic first aid kit

This list is by no means everything you should have available but gives a few ideas:

A suitable container to store the items in such as an old ice cream tub or plastic box with a lid

- Thin rubber/latex gloves
- Cotton wool
- Cotton buds
- Tea towel
- A pair of scissors
- A pair of tweezers
- Antiseptic solution (can obtain from vets)

Bandage materials:

- Non-absorbent dressing
- Padded bandaging material
- Woven bandage or self-adhesive bandage
- Sticky tape

If you are someone who does a lot of walking with your dogs it may pay to have a small kit to take with you. This could also include a small bottle of saline or water for wound flushing.

Cuts and tears

These may vary from small superficial skin tears with little blood to larger gashes that require stitching. Basic examination of the wound will help you decide what to do.

- Trim away any hair that is covering the wound
- Flush well with a good amount of warm water or saline, this will remove any dust or debris
- Apply a light bandage or dressing if possible to minimise further contamination- consult your vet if you are worried



Bleeding wounds

Some deep wounds or those on ears or tails may bleed profusely. The most important thing to do here is to apply pressure.

- For severe wounds where a lot of blood is being lost use a tea towel to create a firm pad. This can be bandaged firmly onto the wound and should not be removed until you reach the vets
- Ears – a head bandage can be applied alternatively use something to hold the ear firmly to the head to stop repeated flapping and give time for a clot to form
- Tails - lots of tape is often required to hold these in place.



- Sometimes wounds that appear small, for example a puncture wound caused by a bite may be significantly contaminated by bacteria. There may be tissue damage beneath the skin that requires treatment.

Seizures

Although these may seem very frightening when they occur it is very important you remain calm.

- Reduce any external stimuli if possible such as loud noises or bright lights
- Many animals may lose control of bladder or bowel function during a fit this is not unusual
- Do not attempt to try and clear an airway you may get bitten
- Reassure your pet whilst the seizure is happening, talk quietly and calmly

Eyes

Foreign bodies in eyes are not uncommon, the eye may be held shut or be swollen sometimes with a discharge.

- Try bathing the eye gently with some cotton wool and warm water to remove any discharge
- Part the lids carefully to see if there is any debris to be removed such as a grass seed
- Flushing with warm water may help dislodge the item alternatively cotton buds can be useful for this
- If the eye remains closed for any time afterwards or you are unable to find the cause of the problem consult the vet.
- Consult your vet as there may be a scratch or ulcer on the eye.



Adder bites

Adders will usually be out on hot days on areas of heath or moorland. Your dog may yelp suddenly and show signs of lameness.

Signs may include sudden swelling of a limb or part of the face plus intense pain

- Immobilise the patient where possible and seek veterinary help
- Do not attempt to tourniquet the affected area