EMERGENCY GUIDE

Pet First Aid and Emergency Guide for Dogs and Cats

What to do in the first minutes of an emergency while you get to a vet, plus a first aid kit checklist and an emergency contacts card.

By Dr. Vaishnavi Karmawat, B.V.Sc. & A.H., Veterinary Officer · vetvaishnavi.com

Go to a vet immediately if your pet: is struggling to breathe; has collapsed or is unconscious; is bleeding heavily; has a seizure lasting more than 2 to 3 minutes or several in a row; has a swollen, hard belly or retches without vomiting; may have eaten poison or a medicine; has been hit by a vehicle; cannot pass urine (especially male cats); has pale, blue or grey gums.

First aid: what to do on the way to the vet

Emergency	Do	Do not
Heatstroke	Move to shade; wet the body with cool (not ice-cold) water; fan; offer small sips of water; go to a vet	Do not use ice or cover with wet towels that trap heat
Bleeding	Press firmly on the wound with a clean cloth for 5 to 10 minutes; add layers if blood soaks through	Do not remove soaked cloth; do not use tight rope tourniquets
Poisoning	Note what, how much and when; take the packet to the vet; go immediately	Do not make your pet vomit unless a vet tells you to
Choking	Open the mouth carefully and remove a visible object if safe; go to a vet urgently	Do not push fingers deep into the throat
Fracture or injury	Keep the pet still; carry on a board or blanket; muzzle gently if in pain	Do not try to straighten a broken leg
Burns	Cool with running cool water for 10 minutes; cover loosely with a clean cloth	Do not apply oil, ghee, toothpaste or creams
Seizure	Move objects away; dim lights; time the seizure; keep hands away from the mouth	Do not hold the tongue or put anything in the mouth

© Vet Vaishnavi · vetvaishnavi.com · care@vetvaishnavi.com

Prepared by Dr. Vaishnavi Karmawat, B.V.Sc. & A.H. · Free to print and share, not for resale

Dog or animal bite	Wash the wound with soap and running water; see a vet the same day for wound care and rabies advice	Do not ignore small bites; punctures get infected
Eye injury	Prevent rubbing; rinse with clean water or saline if dirt is present	Do not use human eye drops

> **Never give human medicines** such as paracetamol or other painkillers to pets unless a vet prescribes them. A single paracetamol tablet can kill a cat.

Normal values to know

	Dog	Cat
Temperature	about 38.0 to 39.2 °C	about 38.0 to 39.2 °C
Gum colour	moist and pink	moist and pink
Capillary refill	press the gum; pink colour should return within about 2 seconds	

First aid kit checklist

- ☐ Clean gauze and cotton
- ☐ Crepe bandage and adhesive tape
- ☐ Blunt-tip scissors
- ☐ Tweezers or tick hook
- ☐ Saline solution
- ☐ Disposable gloves
- ☐ Digital thermometer
- ☐ Clean towel or blanket
- ☐ Soft muzzle
- ☐ Torch
- ☐ This guide and your vet’s number

Emergency contacts

Regular vet clinic

24-hour emergency clinic

Animal helpline (1962 in many states)

Pet name, age and weight

Allergies and medicines

This guide is general information for animal owners and farmers and does not replace an examination by a veterinarian. Vaccine schedules and scheme rules can differ by region and change over time; confirm with your vet, local veterinary hospital or official sources. Questions? Visit vetvaishnavi.com/ask-the-vet or email care@vetvaishnavi.com.

© Vet Vaishnavi · vetvaishnavi.com · care@vetvaishnavi.com

Prepared by Dr. Vaishnavi Karmawat, B.V.Sc. & A.H. · Free to print and share, not for resale