

IRR. Adopters & Fosterers Basic First Aid Priorities for Dogs

BASIC FIRST AID PRIORITIES FOR DOGS

Though most of us try to be responsible pet owners, many people cannot distinguish between life threatening or non life threatening injuries. Many minor injuries or illnesses can be treated safely by the owner such as minor cuts and abrasions. However, if signs of inflammation develop or the dog develops a temperature from a wound it would be best to call your veterinarian.

This could be a sign of infection or other illness. For minor cuts and abrasions, clean wound thoroughly with mild soap and water. Clip away any unwanted or matted hair. Inspect the wound for any foreign matter, then apply an antiseptic ointment or cream. All wounds should be inspected and monitored daily in case an infection develops.

Non life threatening injuries or illnesses are usually accompanied by severe pain. These injuries can include burns, fractures or lacerations that may require stitches. Always approach an injured dog with caution. If the dog makes any attempt to bite, use a muzzle before beginning any treatment. Upon approaching an injured dog, if there are no signs of aggression then stroke the dog, talking calmly and softly. If the dog appears to be shivering or shaking, place a blanket, rug or coat over the dog's body. If the dog appears to be excessively hot, (for example, panting rapidly) cool the dog down by using a fan or an ice pack. Your main concern should be preventing the injury from becoming worse and also preparing the dog for transport to your veterinarian.

Life-threatening injuries or illness include severe bleeding where blood pulsates or flows freely from a wound. Other injuries include no sign of breathing or heartbeat.

As with any injury with your dog, stay calm, and approach the dog cautiously.

To control bleeding, immobilize the dog by holding them firmly. Apply pressure directly to the site with a cotton gauze, then apply a bandage firmly. Remove bandage and reapply with less pressure. If the site is inaccessible, apply an ice pack to the area. Do not dab or attempt to clean the site until the bleeding stops as this action tends to encourage more bleeding. For severe bleeding, or very deep wounds take your dog to the veterinarian. Some words of caution with regards to assisting dogs in this condition. A dog may bleed to death if you panic or hesitate. Keep the dog still, moving them around will accelerate any bleeding. It is usually best for one person to immobilize the dog while the other person controls the bleeding. When a bandage is left on a limb for 30 minutes, always check the area below the bandage for swelling, signs of coldness or no reaction to pain if pinched. If any of these signs are evident, re-apply the bandage with less pressure.

How to check for a heartbeat and pulse:

A normal pulse of a dog varies according to the breed, age, weight and so on.

The normal pulse range is from 80-120 beats per minute. The pulse is a reflection of the heartbeat and is an indicator of blood circulation. To obtain the correct reading, the dog must be calm. This is an ideal time for you to learn where and how to take the pulse and record this in their record book. Place your finger on the inside of the thigh near the groin and feel gently in that area for a pulse from an artery just under the skin. Use a watch with a second hand and count how many beats you feel in one minute's time. You can feel for a heartbeat behind the left elbow between the third and sixth rib. The beat can be observed as a regular, slight movement of the chest wall on the left side of the dog's body, where the heart is located. If this heartbeat is between the 80-120 beats per minute range, then the circulation system is normal. If it is outside this average range, then consult with your physician. (You may also contact your vet for information on pulse rates for very small breeds).

Another thing that you should become acquainted with and mark in your dog's record book is his normal temperature. The normal temperature range for a dog is between 37.8 degrees C (or 100 degrees F) and 39.2 degrees C (or 102.5 degrees F). If your dog's temperature is outside that range consult with your veterinarian as this could be an indicator of an infection or other illness.

An ordinary household thermometer may be used. Shake the mercury down below 37.8 degrees C or 100 degrees F. Smear the thermometer with a non-irritating lubricant such as petroleum jelly. Secure the dog and insert the thermometer into the dog's anus about 2 inches (5 cm) in holding the bulb against the rectal wall. Check the reading after 1-2 minutes time. Wipe the thermometer clean and disinfect, then wash your hands thoroughly. You will be ahead of most situations if you know what your dog's normal pulse rate and temperatures are. Being able to obtain this information can be vital to your veterinarian.

WHEN TO CALL YOUR VETERINARIAN

Call your veterinarian immediately

~When there is heavy bleeding from any part of the body and it will not stop, Apply pressure to stop the bleeding while waiting for or while on the way to your vets.

~Obvious blood in the urine

~Blood in vomit and or severe diarrhea that includes blood or putrid smell or fluid like.

~Burns that are fairly extensive

~Choking when the dog appears distressed, who extends their head and neck, salivates, coughs or paws at the mouth.

~Sudden collapse or loss of balance, staggering or knuckling over, walking in circles, down and unable to get up, muscle tremor, rigidity, paddling movements of legs, depression, coma shock or overreaction to external stimuli that may cause these symptoms.

~Pain whether spasmodic, continuous or severe

~Poisonings due to exposure to chemicals (such as anti-freeze) snake or spider bites, plant ingestion. If possible, retain a sample for vet to identify further.

~Self-mutilation such a continual uncontrollable scratching, biting or tearing at skin causing broken skin and or/bleeding

~Severe breathing distress Where dog is gasping for air, noisy breathing or blue tongue.

~Severe injury including severe pain, lameness, cuts with the bone exposed puncture wounds to the eye, chest or abdomen, fractures or other injuries deemed serious

~Straining continually with failure to urinate or defecate.

~Birthing difficulties, when no pup appears after straining or bitch gives up, or if only part of the pup appears after 20 minutes of straining.

~Swallowed object that causes distress or choking

Call the vet the same day and monitor if

~Afterbirth is retained for 8 hours

~Breathing is difficult, labored, rapid shallow breathing with or without cough

eye problems with tears streaming down cheeks and eyelids are completely or partially closed, cornea is cloudy opaque or bluish-white in color

~Frequent vomiting and if the dog becomes lethargic

~Frostbite or hypothermia causing low body temperature

~Injuries, not urgent but may become infected. a cut through the full thickness of the skin needing stitches., puncture wounds in leg, head or acute sudden lameness.

~Mismating - termination of an unwanted pregnancy can be safely done within 72 hours after intercourse

~Severe diarrhea. Soft or fluid stool with putrid odor and abdominal pain and/or straining

~Severe itching, biting or scratching the skin causing inflammation, and hair loss

~Swellings that are hot, hard and painful or discharging

Wait 24 hours if

~There is appetite loss, not eating with no other symptoms

~Diarrhea soft stool with no abdominal pain, blood or straining

~Itching, moderate with no damage

~Lameness with the ability to bear weight and does not affect eating or other functions

~Occasional vomiting, on 2 or 3 occasions with no other symptoms

~Unpleasant odor from the coat (other than normal)

~Thirst, excessive drinking, often with excessive urinating and apprehension

HOMEOPATHIC EMERGENCY REMEDY LIST FOR DOGS

ACONITE: For all EMOTIONAL TRAUMA,SHOCK, mental anxiety with restlessness, early stages of all feverish states and inflammations accompanied by fever. All effects of exposure to cold dry wind or heat.

APIS: All ALLERGIC REACTIONS, SWELLINGS in reaction to vaccinations, insect bites, thorns, hives, rashes, bee stings, welts, joint swellings. All aggravated by heat, better cold. Swelling of eyelids, ears, throat, lungs, limbs, etc.

ARNICA: ALL PHYSICAL PAIN AND TRAUMA from accidents, bruising, muscle strain, joint injuries, broken bones. Tooth extractions, gum pain. Physical over exertion. Mental anxiety from trauma.

ARGENT NIT: MENTAL AGITATION, ANXIETY, PANIC accompanied by diarrhea, trembling.
CLAUSTROPHOBIA loss of balance and in coordination. Better fresh air.

ARSENICUM: POISONING from chemicals or spoiled rotten meat, moldy foods accompanied by foul smelling diarrhea. Lung disorders.

BELLADONNA: SUDDEN ONSETS of fever, ear aches, heatstroke, throat inflammations with dilated pupils, staring wide open, glazed eyes. Heightened sensitivities. Fever with sweat and full pulse.

BELLIS PERENNIS: Effects of over exertion STRAINS, BRUISES to deep tissue due to blow. Soreness or injury to groin and or pelvic area.

BRYONIA: ALL incidents where the dog is WORSE WITH MOVEMENT, area is painful and better with pressure. Arthritis, rheumatism with hard tense joints. Exhibits great thirst, irritability and fatigue.

CALENDULA: ANTISEPTIC, AIDS IN HEALING TISSUE For all open wounds, cuts, stabs and surgery. Stimulates healing of torn muscles, ligaments, cartilage. Use topically and or internally.

CANTHARIS: BURNS, burning pains, kidneys pain, urinary tract infection, blood in urine, straining or difficulty urinating. Burns, scalds in mouth, throat, external burns. Use topically and or internally.

CARBO VEG: SUDDEN COLLAPSE, almost lifeless body becomes icy cold. Pulse becomes thready weak. Effects of violent sickness, exhaustion, starvation blood loss or abuse. Corpse-like.

CHINA (Chin.) DEBILITY DUE TO PROFUSE EXHAUSTION FROM LOSS OF VITAL FLUIDS, loss of blood with weakness. Anemia in foals, dehydration, diarrhea, dropsy from bleeding. Inflammation of organ after hemorrhaging.

COCCULUS: MOTION SICKNESS (from car rides)exhibiting dizziness, vomiting from motion, vertigo. Exhaustion after dog has returned from a run-a -way ordeal.

GELSEMIUM: (Gels.) ANTICIPATED FEAR. Bad effects from fright, fear (fear of person, animal or vet) worse emotion or excitement, anxiety. Diarrhea from sudden emotions such as a fright or anticipation of an ordeal.

EUPHRASIA: EYE INJURIES, or infection from colds, injury. Irritating watery eye discharge. Onset of cloudiness of cornea. Abrasions or scratches. Use topically as a eye wash and internally.

GLONIUM: HEATSTROKE, COLLAPSE from over exposure to heat or sun. Throbbing pulse, sometimes convulsions.

HEPAR SULPH (Hep.) ABSCESSSES with sensitivity to touch. Thick yellow ropy pus or discharge. Smells like old cheese. BOILS, inflamed sinus, bad infection from open wounds, scratch. Better warmth. Chills easily. Unhealthy skin that every little injury suppurates. Skin ulcers, ear cankers.

HYPERICUM (Hyper.) NERVE INJURIES, from lacerations, animal or insect bites. Tail bone pain from injury. Bone pain. Injury to brain or spinal cord. Jagged wounds involving damage to nerve endings. Toenail pain from injury of clipping too short.

LEDUM (Led.) PUNCTURE WOUNDS, puncture wounds that do not bleed, cold to touch, with general lack of body heat. Worse with warmth, cold discoloration of skin surrounding puncture. Better ice. Deep joint inflammation, foot abscesses. Lameness where dog hangs leg or foot. Infection of site after a vaccination. Tetanus.

MERCURIUS (Merc.) DISCHARGES free secretions with foul smell, thick greenish-yellow. Cough with lots of moist thick nasal discharge, swollen glands, diarrhea, shivering restlessness. Nasal discharge from colds or flu. Abscesses in gums, mouth ulcers.

NUX VOMICA (Nux-v.) INDIGESTION, digestive upsets, MILD COLIC caused by error in diet or weather change. CONSTIPATION with small hard mucus covered stools in small quantities. Rectal uneasiness.

PHOSPHORUS (Phos.) OVERSENSITIVE to effects of lightning, loud noises. Eye and ear disorders. Sudden onset of pneumonia, passing large amounts of urine. HEMORRHAGING of bright red blood. Flu, when eyes are glazed. Dogs with diabetes, overweight with ravenous appetite. THIRSTY.

PULSATILLA (Puls.) TIMID, EMOTIONAL ever CHANGEABLE nature, either physically or emotionally. Dog fears abandonment of being left alone. Great dryness of mouth and generally THIRST-LESS, loss of appetite without thirst. Arthritis with timid emotional nature better gentle movement.

RHUS TOX (Rhus-T) ARTHRITIS, physical and emotional disorder that is ALWAYS BETTER WITH MOVEMENT or exercise. Acute rheumatism, stiffness, lameness from over exertion or straining. Stiff muscles and or joint soreness that loosens up or swelling reduces with exercise.

RUTA GRAV (Ruta) LAMENESS, damage to tendons, ligaments, cartilage, BRUISING to bones, sprains with joint weakness, injury to flexor tendons, contusions, tears, blow, fall or twisting of effected joints.

SEPIA (Sep.) ALL HORMONAL DISORDERS in females. Moodiness, irritability , indifference to pups.

SILICA (Sil) SKIN DISORDERS. Expels foreign bodies from tissues (Slivers). Restores connective tissues, reduces scar tissue formation. Ulcers inside corner of eyes. EMACIATION from cancer, abuse.

SULPHUR (Sulph.) ANTI-SPORIC remedy. Has reoccurring or relapses of condition. Stubborn cough, colds, skin conditions that don 't seem to heal. Great reabsorbent used after acute illnesses.

SYMPHYTUM (Symph.) BONE DISORDERS, pain, fractures, stress fractures. Injuries/blow to the eye.

QUICK REFERENCE

HEATSTROKE

Glodium - Heatstroke, collapse from over exposure to heat or sun

Belladonna - Heatstroke with dilated pupils, staring, wide open, glazed eyes, full pulse.

Carbo Veg - Collapse, lifeless, corpse like.

PHYSICAL TRAUMA

Arnica -Pain and trauma . Bruising or overexertion Blows resulting in injury.

Rhus Tox - Lameness that is better with movement

Ruta - Sprains from twisting

Ledum - Lameness where horse hangs leg balancing on toe.

Apis - All swellings in legs, build up of synovial fluids from strain.

Hypericum - Nerve injury from trauma

FEAR, FRIGHT, ANXIETY

Rescue Remedy for all emotional and physical anxiety

Aconite - For all fear fright and anxiety of unknown origin

Gelsemium - Anticipated anxiety

Ars - Anxiety and restlessness due to toxicity.

Cham - Anxiety due to irritability and temperamental.

CUTS and WOUNDS

Calendula - Internally and topically to aid in healing

Calendula & Hypericum mixed for injuries to eyes.

FEVERS

Belladonna - Fever with glazed eyes, full pulse, sudden onset

Bryonia - Fever worse with movement , hot shiny skin.

Aconite - Early stages of all feverish states. Isolated inflammations.

BURNS

Cantharis - All burns physical and internal.

ALLERGIC REACTIONS

Apis - Swellings of any kind and/or due to insect bites, vaccinations, etc.