

**PET** \_\_\_\_\_  
**FIRST+AID**

*pocket handbook*





# INTRODUCTION

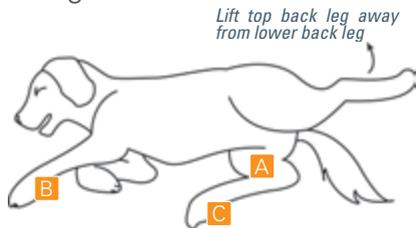
Every pet is unique. Knowing what is normal for your pet is essential in recognizing behaviors that are abnormal. Learn how to recognize your pet's normal temperature, breath rates, heart, and pulse rates. These vital signs will be of crucial importance should an emergency arise.

## HEART RATE & PULSES

### Resting Pulse

#### Inner thigh (A)

- The inner thigh is the easiest of the three locations to feel for a pulse.
- Lay pet down on either side.
- Gently lift the top back leg away from the lower back leg.
- Using a light touch, place your index and middle fingers where the leg meets the torso. You may use either leg.
- Feel for a pulse and count for 60 seconds.



#### Front legs – just below the wrist (B)

- With your pet either sitting or laying down, locate the area just above the middle pad on the underside of either front paw.
- Place your index and middle fingers in that area and feel for a pulse.
- Count for 60 seconds.

#### Hind legs – just below the ankle (C)

- With your pet either sitting or laying down, locate the area just above the middle pad on the underside of either hind paw.
- Place your index and middle fingers in that area and feel for a pulse.
- Count for 60 seconds.

### Heart Rate (Beats per minute)

Keep in mind that younger animals have faster heartbeats than older ones.

 All sizes .....	160-220 BPM
 S: (<30 lbs. or <13.6 kg) .....	100-160 BPM
 M - L: (30-90 lbs. Or 13.6-40.8 kg) .....	60-100 BPM
 XL: (>90 lbs. or >40.8 kg) .....	60-80 BPM

### Breathing Rate

 S: 20-30 breaths per minute .....	Up to 300 pants per minute
 L: 10-30 breaths per minute .....	Up to 200 pants per minute

### Normal Temperatures

 S: .....	100.5° F – 102.5° F (38.1° C – 39.1° C)
 L: .....	100.2° F – 102.8° F (37.9° C - 39.3° C)

## HANDLING

Always approach a sick or injured animal with caution. Even your beloved pet may be aggressive when sick or in pain. Approach slowly, stoop down, allow them to smell the back of your hand, speak softly, and avoid making direct eye contact.

### Muzzling

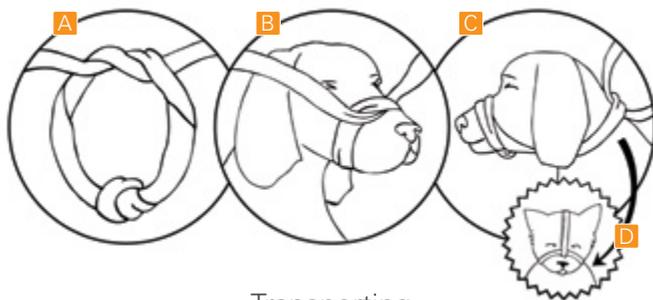
For your safety, you should muzzle your sick or injured pet if possible. Only muzzle your pet if it's safe to do so and never force restraint. Never muzzle a pet that is vomiting, coughing, or having difficulty breathing.

## Makeshift Muzzle

If you do not have a store-bought muzzle on hand, you can use either the nylon strap or roll of gauze included in this kit to make your own makeshift muzzle.

1. Start with a material of at least 18" long.
2. Tie a knot in the middle.
3. Make a loop large enough to fit over the animal's nose (A).
4. Get behind the animal and slip the loop over the nose. \*Always allow the animal to know where you are at all times. Keep enough distance between you and the animal's mouth so they cannot turn around and bite you.
5. Tighten the loop, but not so tight that it interferes with their breathing (B).
6. Place the ends of the material down each side of the face and cross them under the chin. Then bring the ends behind the ears (C).
7. For cats and short-nosed dogs; take one end, pass it under the loop over the nose, and tie it to the other end around the neck. For all other dogs, tie the ends in a bow behind the ears (D).

## How to Make a Muzzle Out of Anything



### Transporting

Moving an injured pet must be done with care to avoid making the problem worse or causing more pain. As a general rule of thumb, injured pets should not rest in your arms, as it is difficult for you not to jostle them or cause them breathing problems.

## For more serious injuries:

- Support your pet's back.
- Keep broken legs supported.
- For a chest injury, lay your pet with his injured lung down on the seat or transport board and his uninjured (or less injured) lung up to aid breathing.

Allow your pet to find his own most comfortable position.

## Three Safest Ways to Transport Your Pet:



Carrier



Flat Board



Stretcher

## TECHNIQUES

### CPR

Only perform CPR if your pet is not breathing! Do not attempt on a conscious animal. Follow the ABC order (Airway, Breathing, Circulation) when performing CPR.

#### A=Airway

- Lay animal on its side. Open airway by gently extending head and neck out by pulling back on the chin until the neck is straight.
- Open mouth and pull out tongue. Clear out debris if needed.

#### B=Breathing

Use the following breathing rates:

 S: 20-30 breaths per minute

 L: 10-20 breaths per minute

- Hold your pet's mouth shut.
- Place your mouth over your pet's nose and forcefully blow just enough to make the chest rise.
- Repeat four or five times, then check to see if your pet begins to breathe on their own.

- If the animal is not breathing or breathing is shallow, continue assisted breathing for a maximum of 20 minutes.
- If there is no pulse or heartbeat, perform chest compressions and alternate with breathing. Check for pulse after each set of compressions.



*Blow through your mouth into your pet's nose.*

### C=Circulation

Performing chest compressions

#### Cat or Small Dog (under 30

lbs./<13.6 kg)

1. Lay the animal down on their right side.
2. Kneel next to the animal with the animal's chest facing you.
3. Place the palm of one of your hands over the ribs at the point where the elbow meets the chest.
4. Compress the chest one-third to one-half of the chest diameter, with your elbows softly locked. Do this 100-150 times per minute.
5. If two people are present, continue rescue breathing during compressions.
6. If this is not possible, alternate 30 chest compressions and two breaths. Check for pulse after two minutes.



*Place the palm of one of your hands over the ribs.*

#### Medium to Large Dog (30-90 lbs./13.6-40.8 kg)

1. Lay animal down to your right.
2. Stand or kneel behind the animal with your arms extended and your hands cupped.
3. Place your palms over the point on the chest behind the elbow.



*Cup your hands and place palms over the ribs behind elbows.*

4. Compress the chest one-third to one-half of the chest diameter, with your elbows softly locked. Do this 100-150 times per minute.
5. If two people are present, continue rescue breathing during compressions.
6. If this is not possible, alternate 30 chest compressions and two breaths. Check for pulse after two minutes.

#### Extra-Large Dog (over 90 lbs./40.8 kg)

1. Follow the same procedure as you would for a Medium to Large dog.
2. Do 10-15 compressions to one breath.

## EMERGENCIES

### Bites

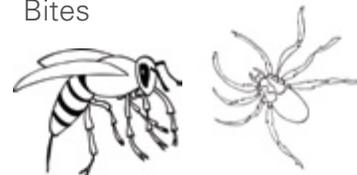
#### Spider Bite/Bee Sting

##### Symptoms:

- Pain
- Redness and swelling
- Itching and licking

##### Treatment:

- Remove stinger with a firm object. Do not attempt to pull it out with your fingers as you may release more venom.
- Apply sting relief pad and/or ice pack included in kit to reduce the swelling.
- If your pet has facial swelling or hives, seek veterinary help immediately. If your pet is vomiting or has difficulty breathing, these may be signs of anaphylactic shock (a severe allergic reaction). Seek veterinary help and prepare to perform CPR if heart stops. See Shock on Page 17, or CPR on previous page.



#### Snake Bite

##### Symptoms:

- Bleeding puncture wound
- Redness and swelling
- Pain
- Twitching and drooling
- Shock

**Treatment:**

- Try to identify the type of snake from a safe distance but do not try to capture the snake.
- Keep your pet calm and still.
- Do not try to suck out the venom or cut open the wound.
- Do not apply ice or a tourniquet to the area.
- Flush wound with water.
- Check for signs of shock.
- Carry your pet to the car as movement will make the venom travel faster. Seek immediate veterinary help.

**Bleeding**

- Wearing the latex gloves included in kit, hold a gauze pad over the bleeding site and apply direct pressure.
- If the blood soaks through, add another layer of gauze without removing the first. Repeat as many times as needed until bleeding stops. Keep the compress in place with bandage material.
- If bleeding continues, continue to apply direct pressure to the wound. For arterial (spurting) bleeding, hold the area just above the wound. For venous bleeding, hold the area just below the wound.
- If bleeding from a limb, elevate the limb above the heart and continue to apply direct pressure.
- If holding above or below wound fails to stop bleeding, apply a pressure bandage by wrapping gauze or other soft material around the wound just tight enough to stop the bleeding. Secure with tape.
- If none of the techniques work, seek immediate veterinary help.

**Bloat/Torsion**

With bloat, the stomach fills with air or food often after a meal. Bloat may be closely followed by torsion, when the stomach turns around on itself and simultaneously cuts off blood supply, resulting in life threatening shock.

**Symptoms:**

- Swollen abdomen
- Drooling or salivation
- Vomiting or retching
- Restlessness and pacing
- Shock

**Treatment:**

- Check for signs of shock and administer CPR if necessary
- Seek immediate veterinary help (especially if you suspect torsion)

**Burns**

- First-degree burns (mild) affect the top layer of skin and appear as angry red welts.
- Second-degree burns go deeper in the skin and may raise blisters.
- Third-degree burns should always be treated by a vet. These burns go through all layers of the skin and into the flesh underneath.

**Treatment:**

- Rinse area with cool water, removing any debris or chemicals.
- Do not use ointments, butter or petroleum jelly on burns.
- If more than one part of the body is burned do not immerse your pet. Run cold water over the areas and apply a non-stick sterile pad over the area.
- For serious burns or first and second-degree burns covering a large area, seek immediate veterinary help.

**Choking**

- Similar to people, if your pet starts choking, he will gag, retch, and cough to try and expel the object.

**Symptoms:**

- Breathing difficulty
- Anxiety
- Gums may be white or blue

**Treatment:**

- Open the animal's mouth and sweep from side to side to see if you can dislodge the object (B). Be careful not to get bitten or push the object further into the throat. Be aware of a firm structure in the throat called the hyoid apparatus. Pulling this could cause severe injury.
- Alternatively, lift the animal by the hind legs and hold them up vertically with the head facing down (A). This position may dislodge the object.

*Corresponding Diagrams on next page >*

**If the object does not come out by doing this, try the following:**

- With the animal standing or lying down, place your arms around his waist.
- Close your fist and place it on the underside of the dog where the ribs end, just below his sternum (C).
- Compress the abdomen by pushing up with your fist five times in rapid succession (similar to the Heimlich Maneuver). Repeat two or three times in succession, sweeping in the mouth to see if the object has become loose in between sets.
- If not successful, try administering a “sharp blow” with the palm of your hand between your pet’s shoulder blades, then repeat the abdominal compressions (D).
- Sweep the mouth again and if the object hasn’t loosened, seek immediate veterinary help. You should prepare to repeat the treatment again in the car and be ready to administer artificial respiration if your pet stops breathing. See CPR Pages 7-9.

**Several Ways To Aid A Choking Animal:**



**A**  
*Head facing down like a wheelbarrow.*



**B**  
*Sweep from side to side to see if you can dislodge the object.*



**C**  
*Compress the abdomen by pushing up with your fist.*



**D**  
*A “sharp blow” between your pet’s shoulder blades might do the trick.*

## Dehydration

**Symptoms:**

- Sunken eyes
- Pale or dry gums
- Weakness or lethargy

**Treatment:**

- Dogs and cats have loose skin at the scruff of their neck (from the top of their head to the base of neck) that is easy to grasp.
- To determine if your pet is dehydrated, pull up on the skin behind the neck. It should spring back to normal in less than one second. If not, the animal is dehydrated.
- If your pet is not vomiting, provide water and if conditions do not improve within a few hours or are accompanied by fever or low body temperature, seek immediate veterinary help.

## Frostbite

Frostbite can be hard to recognize in your pet because of their fur. The most common locations for frostbite are on the tail, tips of ears, and pads of feet.

**Symptoms:**

- Lack of pain or sensation of the affected area
- Discoloration of the affected area
- Area may feel frozen
- Animal may be limp

**Treatment:**

- Start by taking your pet out of the cold.
- Gently and slowly warm the affected area, starting with cool water and then progressing to warm water. Do not put pressure on or rub the area.
- Seek veterinary help immediately as the affected area may have sustained permanent damage.

## Heatstroke

Never leave your pet in a parked car in hot weather and watch for signs of overexertion.

**Symptoms:**

- Body temperature at 104 °F (40 °C) or above
- Excessive panting

- Inability to move
- Bright red tongue or gums
- Bloody diarrhea

#### Treatment:

- Remove your pet from the heat, and place in a cool area.
- Check your pet's temperature. See Normal Temperatures Page 5.
- Spray your pet with cool water or place them in a cool bath. Retake their temperature. You can also try placing water-soaked towels on their head, neck, feet and/or abdomen.
- Repeat until normal temperature is restored and your pet is better hydrated. For details about administering the Dehydration Test on your pet, see previous page.
- Once a temperature of 104 °F (40 °C) is reached, stop the cooling process and seek immediate veterinary help. Many consequences of heatstroke won't show up for a few days. If a temperature of 104 °F (40 °C) is not reached in 10-15 minutes, seek immediate veterinary help.

### Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a drastic reduction in body temperature which can lead to serious health problems.

#### Symptoms:

- Temperatures below 100 °F (37.8 °C)
- Shivering
- Weak pulse
- Pale or blue gums

#### Treatment:

- Get your pet indoors and take his temperature. See Normal Temperatures Page 5.
- Wrap him in warm blankets or the emergency blanket included in the kit. Apply a warm water bottle next to him, or on top of the blankets.
- Check for signs of shock.
- Recheck his temperature from time to time until normal temperature is reached.
- See your veterinarian as soon as possible.
- If you are not successful in restoring your pet's temperature back to normal, seek immediate veterinary help.

### What Your Pet's Body Temperature Suggests:



### Injury

Injuries can range from sprains and strains, to more severe injuries such as a leg fracture or dislocation of the joint. Start by calming down your pet to try and diagnose the injury.

#### Sprains & Strains

An injury to the muscle.

#### Symptoms:

- Limping
- Swelling
- Pain

#### Treatment:

- With your pet lying down, cover the injured limb with a towel and apply an ice pack on top.
- Do this 3-4 times daily, for 5-15 minutes at a time. After the first 24 hours, switch from icing the injury to warm compresses. Apply as with the ice pack.
- Do not resume exercise of activity until the injury heals.
- If there is no improvement or the injury worsens over 24 hours, seek immediate veterinary help.

#### Bone Fractures

A break in the bone.

#### Symptoms:

- Pain
- Disfigurement and/or bone sticking through the skin
- Lameness
- Swelling

#### Treatment:

- For all fractures, watch for shock and administer CPR as needed. For more information on Shock see Page 17 and CPR page 7-9.

- Keep the animal calm.
- Loosely cover the wound with sterile gauze or pad and loosely tape.
- Avoid splinting unless properly trained.
- Seek immediate veterinary help.

### Joint Dislocation

The two most common joints to be dislocated (bone out of joint) are your pet's elbows and hips.

#### Symptoms:

- Pain when affected area is touched
- Foot does not reach the ground
- If hip is affected: the dislocated hind leg may be shorter or longer than the other
- If elbow is affected: the dislocated elbow may be bent and lower leg may be pointed towards or away from the body

#### Treatment:

- Check your pet for signs of shock, administer CPR if needed.
- Avoid splinting unless properly trained.
- Seek your veterinarian as soon as possible.

## Poisoning

First call your veterinarian or the National Animal Poison Control Center 1-888-426-4435 for more information about the specific poison involved. If you know what the poison was, take the vomit, poison or container the poison was in, to the veterinarian with you.

#### Ingested Poisons Treatment:

- Call your veterinarian immediately and do not induce vomiting unless told to do so.

#### Inhaled Poisons Treatment:

- Get your pet into fresh air immediately.
- Watch for shock and administer CPR is needed. For information on Shock see the next page and for CPR see Pages 7-9.

#### Topical Poisons Treatment:

- Quickly identify the topical toxin. For water-based toxins, use a mild dish washing liquid and rinse

thoroughly. Repeat as necessary until all of the topical poison is removed. For oil-based toxins, first apply butter, peanut butter, mayonnaise, or mechanic's hand degreaser. Then bathe with mild dish washing soap as above.

- If the poison is in the eye, flush with water or sterile eyewash.
- If the poison is a powder, dust or vacuum it off.

## Shock

- Shock is a life-threatening condition that occurs when the body doesn't get enough oxygen. There are three stages of shock, listed below:

#### Mild Shock Symptoms

- Low body temperature. See Body Temperature Rates Page 5
- Increased heart rate and pulse. See Normal Heart Rates Page 5
- Gums may look dark pink or red

#### Severe Shock Symptoms

- Hypothermia (low body temperature)
- Even more increased heart rate, but a weaker pulse
- Gums may look white
- Cool limbs

#### Terminal Shock Symptoms:

- Slow heart rate. See Normal Breathing Rates Page 5
- Semi-consciousness or unconsciousness
- Weak or absent pulse

#### Shock Treatment:

- If your pet is bleeding, see Bleeding Page 10
- Administer CPR as needed
- Wrap animal with thermal blanket included in the kit, or in a towel
- Seek immediate veterinary help. Shock can be fatal

## Traumatic Injury

- Always seek immediate veterinary help for traumatic injury.

#### Broken Back Symptoms:

- Severe pain
- Inability to move
- Obvious spinal deformity
- Open anus
- Dribbling urine or feces



### Broken Back Treatment:

- Try to calm your pet to stabilize breathing.
- If the animal is unconscious, administer CPR as needed. See CPR Pages 7-9.
- Place a rigid board or hard plastic surface on its side along the back of the animal.
- Slide the board under your pet keeping them as still as possible.
- Wrap the board and animal with sheets or blankets.
- Wrap tape, cloth or rope around the board and animal to keep them tight and secure.
- Seek immediate veterinary help.

### Car Accident

- If you witnessed the event, try to make a mental note of where your pet was hit, and whether the animal was simply hit, thrown, or driven over.
- Carefully approach the scene of the accident.
- Alert oncoming traffic by waving your hands or a towel.
- If traffic has not stopped, carefully move your pet to the side of the road by dragging the animal by the fur on the top of the body, trying to keep the body as still as possible. Your pet may be scared or in pain, so be sure he cannot bite you, using a muzzle if needed. See Makeshift Muzzle on Page 6.
- Check your pet's vital signs: breathing, heartbeat and pulse. Administer CPR as needed.
- Note the following important information for the veterinarian: position of the animal; presence of blood, urine, or feces.
- If the animal cannot move, follow first aid instructions for the Broken Back above, to transport.
- Check for open wounds and damage to the limbs. If your pet can stand, note if they are limping or favoring one side.
- If your pet is bleeding, see first aid instructions for Bleeding on Page 10.
- Check for signs of shock. See Shock on Page 17.
- Seek immediate veterinary help. Some traumatic injuries don't present themselves until 48-72 hours after an accident.

*Try to keep the body as still as possible*



## EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Pet's Name .....

Your Name .....

Address .....

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Phone Number .....

Veterinarian .....

Address .....

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Phone Number .....

Allergies .....

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Other Notes .....

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## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

National Animal Poison Control Center.....1-888-426-4435

National Pet Recovery Hotline.....1-800-984-8638  
Report a missing pet

Emergency Disaster Hotline.....1-800-227-4645  
Pet support during a disaster

Legal Hotline (for reporting animal abuse).....1-800-555-6517