

Would you know

# WHAT TO DO if your pet was involved

## in an ACCIDENT?

Try not to panic. Your pet's survival may depend on you keeping a clear head.

### CALL YOUR VET

- Keep your vet's telephone number on your mobile.
- Always call your regular vet first as the out of hours contact details may change on a day-by-day basis.
- Always telephone your practice first rather than just turn up since some practices deal with different types of emergencies at different sites. The vet may be able to give you advice by telephone, or get the operating theatre prepared.
- Don't give the pet patient anything to eat or drink unless the vet tells you to do so.



### Basic examination

A quick examination of your pet is extremely useful when describing the injuries that your animal may have sustained to your vet or vet nurse. With your own safety in mind, attempt to check the gums (should be pink), breathing (normal/laboured/ noisy), assess for pain, ability to walk (lameness) and any discharges present.

All this information can quickly pinpoint your animal's injury or illness and allow the vet to provide you with suitable first aid measures to apply.

### Broken bones

Road traffic accidents are the biggest single cause of fractures in pets. Falls and injuries indoors can also result in broken bones which are generally very easy to spot. Signs of a broken bone are pain, swelling, unnatural movement, loss of function, deformity or a grating noise.

Transport your pet as carefully as possible to the nearest vet.

### Bleeding

Caused by anything from bites to grazes, wounds to cuts, a bleeding injury is one that needs to be quickly dealt with.

Apply pressure over the site with your hand or a bandage from your pet first aid box. If blood seeps through the first bandage, apply another one as replacing it will remove the clot which is forming and open the wound again. Don't apply a tourniquet unless bleeding seems unrelenting as this carries risk of stopping circulation to the affected area, resulting in gangrene. Do your best to keep your pet as quiet and still as possible whilst calling your vet.

### FIRST AID

Keep a Pet First Aid kit at home and with you when you are travelling which should contain:

- Bandages - adhesive and open weave
- Cotton wool
- Swabs
- Clean pieces of sheeting
- Water wash bottle
- Tweezers
- 5" flat scissors with round ends
- A rug or blanket can be used as a stretcher

## TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS involving dogs

Safety first - don't make things worse for you, others or your dog.

### Transport to the vet or move the dog away from the traffic

- If the dog can walk, gently coax into a car and help the dog get in.
- If the dog needs to be moved out of the traffic and cannot walk:
  - Large dogs can be lifted on a blanket, coat, rug or firm board.
  - Small and medium dogs can be lifted with hands underneath the hindquarters and the chest.
- However, don't move your dog (unless advised to do so by the vet ) if it is very badly injured or you suspect spinal injuries.

### CALL YOUR VET

- Direct the traffic if you can.
- Approach the dog from the front so the animal can see you.
- Speak gently, using the dog's name if possible.



## BASIC RESUSCITATION for dogs

this can be thought of as the ABC of resuscitation

A



### Airway

A clear unobstructed airway is crucial to survival so:

- Pull the tongue forward.
- Check there is nothing in the throat. Rubber balls are best dislodged by pushing them from behind the lower jaw bones as opposed to trying to grab them inside the mouth.

B



### Breathing

- Look for chest movements - these can be as infrequent as every 15 seconds.
- Listen with your ear close to the mouth if your dog is unconscious.
- If the dog is not breathing, straighten its neck, close the mouth and gently blow down inside the nose, using your hand as a tube so you do not touch the nose with your lips.

C



### Circulation

- Check the heartbeat/pulse by feeling the bottom of the chest just behind the elbows.
- Apply regular, intermittent gentle pressure to the chest if you are sure there is no heartbeat.
- Don't blame yourself - unfortunately most CPR in animals outside of an emergency room is ineffective but it doesn't hurt to try.