



THE BARRACKS
VET SURGERY
MOSMAN

EMERGENCIES

Abdominal or thoracic edema (an excessive buildup of fluid)

Causes: Injury, disease or reaction to surgery.

Symptoms: Swelling, tenderness.

Treatment: If unconsciousness, maintain open airway, clear nose and mouth, keep neck extended (to promote air flow) immobilise, transport to vet, monitor breathing and heart rate,
(Normal heart rate dogs 60 - 180 per min, slower in bigger dogs and faster in smaller)
(Normal heart rate cats 110 - 180 per min).

Allergies / Anaphylaxis

Symptoms: Diarrhea, defecation, urination, vomiting, itchiness, weakness, hypersalivation, difficult or rapid breathing, pale gums, elevated heart rate, weak pulses, or cold limbs

Treatment: Maintain airway, (clear nose and mouth, keep neck extended) identify possible cause, bring sample and pet to vet.

Anaemia

Symptoms: Loss of appetite, lethargy, pale mucous membranes of the gums and tongue, vomiting, fast pulse and respiratory rate or collapse.

Treatment: Check and record CRT (the time it takes capillaries to refill eg when you press your finger against the pet's gum), keep warm, vet will take blood sample for PCV (packed cell volume assessment), if decreased, may require transfusion.

Burns

Treatment: Flood with cold water for 15 minutes (get help to restrain animal), and if it is a chemical burn prevent animal licking itself, do not induce emesis, transport to vet.

Cardiac arrest

Causes: Injury, acute or chronic illness.

Symptoms: Collapse, no heart sounds.

Treatment: Cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) at the vet. (IV catheter, atropine, adrenalin).
Try CPR if far from vet.



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Dystocia (trouble giving birth)

Treatment: Call for vet, vet ambulance or transport animal/s to vet.

Fractured or dislocated bones

Symptoms: Lameness, incorrect, bent or unusual limb position, bone piercing skin, pain on touch

Treatment: Immobilise with improvised splint, pad and bandage, transport to vet. If possible, transport in box or crate to prevent further trauma. Lay animal injured side up.

Fractured skull

Symptoms: Loss of coordination or head tilt, unequal pupils, seizures, unconsciousness, blindness, change in behaviour, or difficulty breathing.

Treatment: Keep animal calm and immobilise, transport to vet.

Gastric torsion (“Bloat”)

Causes: Gulping food and running, it is especially common in deep chested dogs. The neck of the stomach actually twists until it is in the wrong place, blood circulation is cut off and toxins start to build up.

Symptoms: Restlessness, collapse, bloated abdomen, or difficulty breathing.

Treatment: Keep comfortable, nil by mouth, advise vet if bloating is visible, of any recent food ingested, and of recent exercise. Bring samples of recent diet changes. Emergency surgery may be required.

Haemorrhage

Treatment: Stem bleeding with pressure bandage, pressure point technique, apply direct digital pressure, or (for limited times only) use a tourniquet.

If it is a gaping wound or post surgical prolapse, surround any foreign bodies with a donut (raised) bandage, bandage over the site, transport to vet.

Heat exhaustion

Causes: Heat Exhaustion is common in animals in cars (even in the shade with windows cracked) or if black dogs run on hot days.

Symptoms: Collapse, panting, dry mucous membranes, hot feet etc

Treatment: Attempt to return body to 38.50 C (dog), 38.30 C (cat)
(Use a rectal thermometer and some lubricant) Offer drinking water, use cooling cloths / baths / fans until body temperature is half a degree above normal but don't put ice directly on skin. Monitor for further deterioration, if far from vet put hyperthermic dogs in lukewarm / cool bath.



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Invenomation

Symptoms: Change in behaviour, localised swelling, redness or pain, anaphylaxis, collapse

Treatment: Wasp stings: use a solution of vinegar,
Bee stings: use a solution of bicarbonate of soda, scrape the sting away, don't pull it out,
Spider and snake bites try to identify invenomator, (take photo), apply pressure wound to bite, minimise movement to reduce circulation,
In all cases, transport to vet.

Neurological disturbance

Symptoms: head tilt or incoordination.

Treatment: Try to keep animal calm, monitor symptoms, gently limit movement, transport to vet.

Paraphimosis (penis will not retract)

Treatment: Prevent further drying and irritation by spraying area with clean lukewarm water, transport to vet.

Poisoning

Symptoms: Loss of appetite, impaired movement, muscle tremors, fainting, vomiting, seizures, difficulty breathing or unusual black stools.

Treatment: Call poisons info line, get product details, determine when and how much was ingested, bring sample with all packaging, transport to vet.
If 2 hours or more from Vet, make animal swallow washing soda to induce vomiting.

Prolapsed eyeball

Symptoms: Eye is bulging or displaced from socket

Treatment: Prevent self trauma (pawing at the eye), carry pet rather than lead, if possible draw eyelids over eyeball, spray with water to prevent drying, transport to vet

Respiratory distress

Causes: If there is difficulty INHALING, pet may have a ball or object stuck, otherwise it may just be a cough/inflammation of respiratory tract. More severe cases can be associated with long-term illnesses like heart disease or tumour.

Symptoms: Gums turning blue, gasping, choking, gagging,

Treatment: Animal may resent handling, try to maintain airway (clear nose and mouth, keep neck extended), transport in comfortable box or crate.



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Shock

Most animals that need first aid will have some shock. Shock is not just emotional trauma from an incident, but how the body responds to trauma. Shock means that adequate oxygen is not travelling through the body, so cells start to die. As we know, oxygen gets to the cells by being transported through the bloodstream.

Causes: Shock can be caused by

- haemorrhage or loss of body fluids, and so circulation is redirected to vital organs (this is called hypovolaemic shock),
- circulation and blood pressure falling (vasculogenic shock),
- vasculogenic shock can also be due to an animal being hit by a car resulting in brain or spinal trauma, (this is called neurogenic shock),
- bee sting or other antigen (anaphylactic shock),
- toxins or bacteria build up in bloodstream (septic or endotoxic shock).

Symptoms: Cold extremities/ears, rapid heartrate, slow shallow breathing, slow CRT (capillary refill time, ie the time it takes capillaries to refill eg when you press your finger against the pet's gum), cold dry mucous membranes, possibly collapse and convulsions.

Treatment: Warm with blankets, stop bleeding (see HAEMORRHAGE) keep environment quiet and dark, comfort and stroke, rush to the vet so that fluid or blood transfusion can be given. It is far more urgent to do this than to set broken bones etc.

Seizures

Symptoms: Strong tremors, hyper-salivating or defecation/urination, temporary collapse or loss of consciousness.

Treatment: Measure length of seizure/s, note way animal moved and if there was hyper-salivating or defecation/urination. Do not handle pet whilst fitting, darken and quieten room, comfort animal, restrain in case of further seizures, transport to vet.

Smoke inhalation

Treatment: Offer small amounts of water, transport to vet for intubation and oxygen.

Ticks

Causes: Attachment of the tiny parasite which lives in bush and injects a toxin as it draws a blood meal.

Symptoms: Weak back legs, coughing, gagging or vomiting, unusual bark or miaow, difficulty breathing, lethargy.

Treatment: Remove tick by easing out clockwise or anticlockwise with tweezers or preferably a tick twister. Bring tick and the pet to the vet. The animal may need anti-venene, intravenous support, oxygen therapy and 24 hour/day nursing in hospitalisation.