



**Help ... it's an emergency!**

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## WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY

An emergency is anything requiring immediate medical or surgical intervention to prevent death or suffering of a pet. Because our pets cannot tell us what they're feeling, it is often difficult to tell if an illness/injury is a true emergency or not. If you are unsure, you may always call the hospital and one of the nurses will advise you on whether to bring your pet in immediately or not.

Please understand that we cannot make a diagnosis over the phone and the final decision as to come in or not will still be at your discretion.

### ANY ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING JUSTIFY A VISIT TO THE EMERGENCY CLINIC

There are many situations which may give you reason to be unsure if you should visit the emergency clinic. We have listed some of the more potentially serious emergencies below.

We encourage you to always seek veterinary help if you suspect a pet emergency.

# PET EMERGENCIES

- DIFFICULTY BREATHING
- BLOATED ABDOMEN
- MORE THAN 2 BOUTS OF VOMITING AND/OR DIARRHOEA IN 24 HOURS
- UNABLE TO STAND OR MOVE A SPECIFIC LIMB
- VOCALIZING (CRYING OUT IN PAIN)
- SEVERE BLEEDING OR BLEEDING THAT DOESN'T STOP WITHIN 5 MINUTES
- SEIZURES
- RAPID SWELLING OF THE FACE/ EXTREMITIES WITH OR WITHOUT REDNESS/WELTS
- KNOWN INGESTION OF POISON
- SNAKEBITE
- MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT
- BITE WOUNDS/LACERATIONS



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You should always seek veterinary help if you suspect a pet emergency.

Your pet's size, age and comorbidities also affect this! For example, a 30kg Africanus who has diarrhea twice but is still eating, drinking, and playing is probably ok whereas a 300g kitten who has diarrhea twice is at risk of dehydration even if still eating, and needs to be seen as soon as possible.

## WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A VISIT TO THE EMERGENCY CLINIC

When you arrive our reception team will assist you to fill out registration forms if you are a new client, or find your file on the system if you are an existing client. Once you are loaded onto the appointment schedule you will be attended to as soon as possible. We work on a first come – first served basis as far as possible, however critically ill pets will be moved up the queue at the discretion of our staff. If you believe your pet has been overlooked and should be moved up the list, you have the right to request that a vet nurse comes to triage your pet. Depending on the day wait times may vary. Please be patient – we will attend to your pet as soon as we can.

## WHILE YOU WAIT

An emergency situation with your pet is a very stressful time and it is only human for our emotions to overwhelm us in these situations. The best thing you can do for your pet is to try stay calm and assist by providing us with as much information as possible - in order for us to help you as efficiently as we can.

- Try and stay as calm as possible.
- It is a good idea to go over events in your head so that you are prepared to ask and answer questions once in consult.
- Talk to other people at home who may have seen something different or know something you don't.
- The more information we have, the better we can help you and your pet.



**Please be patient –  
we will attend  
to your pet as soon  
as we can.**

Once in consult we will talk you through each step of the process. Every visit starts with a basic exam. From this we may already be able to recommend a course of treatment, or we may suggest further diagnostics (x-rays, blood tests, etc). Relevant costs will also be explained before anything is done. From here, we will either prepare to send your pet home with you or prepare them for admission into hospital.

If your pet is going home, please provide us with the name of their usual veterinarian or practice so that we can send their medical history directly to their vet.

If your pet needs to be admitted, you may choose to leave them with us for the duration of their treatment, or to take them back to your regular vet as soon as they reopen. Either way, we will send their charts to their vet once they are discharged. We always advise that you consult your regular vet before transferring your pets to allow them to prepare for your arrival.

During their hospital stay, a veterinarian will call you at important intervals during their treatment. Our fabulous nurses will send you an SMS every morning and are available to chat to you about your pets' progress daily. However, please remember that the more time we spend on the phone with you, the less time we spend with your precious pets.



Out of hours, we work on a skeleton staff. This means that non-emergency procedures may be delayed until normal hours e.g. fracture repair or certain diagnostic procedures. Your admitting vet will discuss a realistic timeline with you at the time of admission.

## CHECKLIST - WHAT TO BRING WITH



A leash or appropriate pet carrier.



Your pet's vaccine card – this is important but easy to overlook in the rush. If you can, keep a picture of the sticker page/s on your cell phone gallery or email inbox so that it's easily accessible.



Your pet insurance details. As far as possible, we will always try to give you options as to your pet's treatment. Knowing what your insurance covers may help you in the decision-making process.



If your pet has been under treatment at their local vet or is on any medication, please bring in the medication as well as any documents/invoices stating what treatment they have had and when. Some medications are dangerous when combined so it is hugely helpful to know what we can or cannot use. If your pet needs to be admitted to hospital, leaving us their tablets means we don't have to dispense them twice and can save you money.



If you suspect your pet has eaten a toxic substance, bring the wrapper, box or any packaging. Try and determine how much your pet ingested and when they may have eaten it.



## EMERGENCY CARE AT HOME

### WOUND CARE

- Place firm pressure on the wound with a clean cloth or dressing.
- **DO NOT** attempt to place a bandage.
- Bandages placed too tightly can cause irreparable tissue damage.
- Flush dirty wounds with sterile saline if available.
- **DO NOT** put mercurochrome on wounds.

### SEIZURES

- **DO NOT** put your hands in their mouth.
- Place a wooden spoon or a stick between their jaws if they are biting their tongue.
- Place something soft under their head, and try place barriers between them and furniture, staircases, swimming pools etc
- You may place a hand on their body to comfort them but **DO NOT** attempt to restrain them.
- If you need to transport them while seizing, use a towel as a sling to lift them and do not hold them close to your face.

### POISON

- You can make a small ball out of washing powder and dose it like a tablet down the dogs throat. This will cause them to vomit up anything they may have eaten.
- **DO NOT** try this if they are already showing symptoms of poisoning such as drowsiness or tremors etc, as it can be a choking hazard.



**First and foremost be careful!**  
An animal in distress may bite or scratch out of fear/pain. Don't assume they won't hurt you just because they normally wouldn't. It's not their fault, just a normal response to a bad situation.

