



Simple First-Aid for Animals – Aims and Rules

(Remember, First-Aid only serves as temporary relief before you rush the animal to a Vet)

The Aims of First Aid are:

1. To preserve life.
2. To prevent suffering.
3. To prevent the situation from deteriorating.

The Rules of First Aid are:

1. Don't Panic.
2. Maintain the airway
3. Control Hemorrhage.
4. Contact a Veterinarian as soon as possible.

Never forget the aims and Rules while attending to emergencies. An emergency can be on of the following:

- Life threatening emergency requiring immediate attention.
- Non Life threatening emergency.
- Minor emergencies.



Approach the animal carefully and reassuringly. An injured animal can bite. Some animals may be able to move, some may not. An animal able to walk may be led to a safe place and confined.

Examine the animals carefully:

1. Feel the pulse.
2. Note respiration.
3. Note the eyes – dull or bright.
4. Examine head for injury and colour of the mouth and gums. If cold or pale, frothing etc.
5. Examine limbs for broken bones.
6. If fits occur or limbs are stiff it could indicate poisoning.

Conditions that require first aid:

1. Hemorrhage
2. Burns and scalds
3. Bleeding from the nose
4. Heat stroke / collapse
5. Wasp and Bee stings
6. Snake bite
7. Fracture of bones
8. Wounds
9. Suffocation
10. Drowning
11. Electric Shock
12. Poisoning
13. Road accidents



- 1) **Hemorrhage:** Apply firm pressure to stop the bleeding. Use a tourniquet. Tincture benzoin helps the blood proteins coagulate and hence clot faster. Do not tie tourniquet for more than 10 minutes at a time. If mouth and gums are pale and body temperature is cold, wrap in bubble wrap or with available cloth to keep warm.
- 2) **Burns and scalds:** The burnt area should be flushed with cool water or saline. Soothing preparations like aloe should be applied over the burns. Do not cover. Keeps flies away.
- 3) **Bleeding from the nose (Epistaxis):** Rest is important. Keep the animal in a cool place. An ice pack can be used. If bleeding persists an injection needs to be administered by a vet.
- 4) **Heat stroke / collapse:** Heat stroke can be caused due to environmental heat, over exertion etc. The animal should be brought to a cool place and given limited water to drink. Body temperature can be brought down with water or ice packs around neck and head.
- 5) **Wasp and Bee stings:** Wash the affected area with water and washing soda – 2 teaspoons in 500 ml water.
- 6) **Snake bite:** Venomous snake bites – Apply a tourniquet immediately and try to make an incision to drain out the venom if possible. Rush the animal to a vet.
- 7) **Fracture of bones:** A breach in the continuity of the bone is a fracture. Restrict movement to minimum and administer a pain killer / analgesic.
- 8) **Wounds:** Clean wound with water or saline. Make sure any dirt, glass / metal objects etc. are removed carefully. Apply antiseptic or antibiotic lotion, using a sterile bandage, tying not too tightly. Ice or cold water can be used for wounds that are not open.



9) **Suffocation**: Move to a place with fresh air and remove any obstructions like collar, chain, string around the neck or bone piece from the throat. If necessary artificial resuscitation should be given

10) **Drowning**: Animals are naturally good swimmers. Most animals succumb to drowning due to exhaustion. Place the animal on its right side, head and neck extended and tongue pulled out. Hold up by the legs for a few seconds to drain water from respiratory passage in case of small animals.

Resuscitation may be needed.

11) **Electric shock**: Cut off electricity immediately before handling the animal. Push the animal away from wires / electrical pole with a piece of wood. Use rubber gloves if possible. Treat burns as earlier explained.

12) **Poisoning**: Symptoms are vomiting, salivation, convulsions, muscular twitches, diarrhea, pain, shortness of breath or trembling. Try to determine if the animal has consumed poison or some corrosive material. Do not induce vomiting. Bring the animal to a vet immediately.

13) **Road accidents**: Remove the animal from the middle of the street very carefully without twisting the body or applying pressure. Use an improvised stretcher like a wooden board or blanket. Wrap it to keep warm and prevent it from escaping. If there are broken bones do not move the animal at all. Let it lie on its side and ensure nothing obstructs its breathing passage. Examine carefully and administer first aid till it can reach a vet.

Skin infection / dermatitis: Signs are constant itching, hair fall, red patches, strong body odor. Causes could be allergy, low immunity or nutritional deficiency. See a vet immediately or it can get serious. Check surroundings for cause of allergy – house hold chemical cleaners, detergents, garden pesticides etc.



Deal with incontinence: If an older dog has incontinence, give it a stool with nylon rope netting to sleep on. The urine will drip to the floor where you can keep a tray or bucket to catch it. The animal will have sound sleep and an improved sense of well being, not getting soaked in its own urine.

For people who support community dogs:

A quick and easy method for street dogs with skin infection, if you cannot catch the dog, is through specially prepared ivermectin oral drops on glucose biscuits. Have it prepared by a vet. When repeated again after 15 days we have witnessed amazing results! We don't recommend touching the dog without protection. An external application / concoction can be made from neem oil diluted in cooking oil (for parasites), spectrazole / nitrofurazone ointment (for the disease) and haldi as a disinfectant and pain killer. This can be mixed in a container and applied externally if possible.

CAUTION: The box with biscuits must be labeled “NOT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION” and kept very carefully – out of reach of children.

Tips for helping injured birds:

Keep the bird in a cool dark place and confine in ventilated box (cardboard box with plenty of holes) till you can reach a vet. Provide water with a few drops of rescue remedy for shock. Provide food if you know the diet - if not, a good source of food is dry dog or cat food soaked in water and made into pellets, till you can provide its natural diet. Never force feed water - place a drop on the beak and it will swallow by itself.