



ARRIVAL AT THE SCENE

1. Observe

- a. Assess safety of location (watch for traffic, downed power lines, other animals, etc.)
- b. CALL for Assistance – *DO NOT call 911* – call Vet, Animal Shelter, or Humane Society
- c. Watch animal's behavior

2. Approach

- a. Avoid direct eye contact – use indirect sight
- b. Use soft, soothing voice
- c. Allow animal to sniff back of hand

3. Capture

- a. Leash can be used
- b. Towel tossed over the animal
- c. Use a box for cats or small dogs
- d. Protect animal until help arrives

4. Muzzle

- a. USE WITH CAUTION – dangerous if vomiting, coughing, or breathing difficulty present
- b. Types of muzzles
- c. Homemade muzzle (nylon stocking, leash, soft rope)

5. Restrain Animal

- a. May use headlock
- b. Lying on side
- c. Scruff and Sit (cat)

Choose the appropriate restraint after assessing extent and location of injuries.

6. Transportation

- a. Small dog or cat – Cradle in hands and arms; may use a box
- b. Medium/large dog – arm under and around neck, cup other arm behind hind legs (abdominal injury) or cup arm under belly (hind leg injury)

RECOGNIZING AN EMERGENCY *(some examples of an emergency situation)*

- Trauma, car accident, gunshot wound, etc.
- Difficulty breathing
- Seizures – seizures lasting more than 2 minutes and repeating seizures
- Cuts or gashes that allow exposure of internal organs, or lets them fall out
- Excessive bleeding – spurting or prolonged
- Heat Stroke and Hyperthermia (body temp too high); or hypothermia (body temp too low)
- Poisoning
- Shock
- Burns
- Open wounds with visible bone or severe tissue damage
- Profuse diarrhea or vomiting
- Straining to eliminate (urinate or defecate)
- Unconsciousness
- Painful, enlarged abdomen
- Problems whelping (giving birth)
- Severe depression

NORMAL VITAL SIGNS – Know what is normal for YOUR pet; practice on your pet when no emergency present.

1. Heart Rate (pulse)

- a. Location:
 - i. Left elbow – where it touches the chest
 - ii. Inner thigh – light touch where leg meets body wall
 - iii. Just below wrist or ankle – just above the middle pad
- b. Rate:
 - i. Small, miniature or toy (30 lbs or less) – 100-160 beats per minute
 - ii. Medium, Large (30 lbs or more) – 60-100 beats per minute
 - iii. Puppy (birth – 1 yr) – 120-160 beats per minute

Animal First Aid Guide

2. **Respirations** (breathing rate)
 - a. Dogs
 - i. 10-30 breaths per minute
 - ii. Up to 200 pants per minute
 - b. Cats
 - i. 20-30 breaths per minute
 - ii. Up to 300 pants per minute
 - iii. Cats do not normally pant unless distressed or frightened. Longer can be an emergency
 - c. Normally the chest rises and falls. If abdomen is actively expanding instead of the chest, the can possibly indicate a problem.
 - d. Loud, shallow, or gasping sounds is an emergency
 - e. *NO breathing at all IS AN EMERGENCY*
3. **Temperature**
 - a. Secure the animal; use thermometer and lubrication
 - b. Insert thermometer into rectum *just past* the tip of thermometer
 - c. Normal Temperature:
 - i. Dogs – 100.2 F to 102.8 F
 - ii. Cats – 100.5 F to 102.5 F
 - d. *Temperature below 100 or above 104 IS AN EMERGENCY*
4. **Mucus Membrane Color**
 - a. Can help indicate if animal is getting enough oxygen in the bloodstream
 - b. To check color:
 - i. Lift upper or lower lip and observe color of gums and/or inner lip
 - c. For breeds with black or dark membranes:
 - i. Place thumb on skin just under lower eyelid
 - ii. *Gently* pull down and observe membrane of lower eyelid
 - d. *Normal is pink – blue, yellow, pale, white, brick red, or brown IS AN EMERGENCY*
5. **Capillary Refill Time (CRT)**
 - a. Can help indicate how well the blood is circulating
 - b. CRT is the time it takes the gums or inner lip to return to normal pink after pressing them
 - i. After checking membrane color, press lightly on gums or inner lip
 - ii. Observe the color as it turns white and then back to pink again
 - c. *Normal is 0.5 to 2 seconds – more than 3 seconds IS AN EMERGENCY*

SURVEY EMERGENCY VICTIM (usually should take about 1 minute)

1. Inspect the AREA
 - a. Observe body position; presence of blood, feces, or vomit
 - b. Breathing patterns and sounds
 - c. Other material around the victim
2. Inspect the ANIMAL
 - a. **Airway**
 - b. **Breathing**
 - c. **Circulation**
 - d. Mucus Membrane Color
 - e. Capillary Refill Time (CRT)
 - f. Bleeding
 - g. Level of Consciousness

CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION (CPR)

CPR is the method used to treat an animal that is not breathing or has no heartbeat.

CPR is based on 3 principles called the “ABC’s of CPR”: **A**irway **B**reathing **C**irculation

NOTE -- Dog Scouts of America also offers the **Canine CPR** merit badge if you are interested in learning how to do this safely and properly!