



# First aid for your pet

A guide for pet owners from Nationwide® pet insurance

## Pet emergency warning signs

Seek veterinary attention right away if you notice changes in your pet's health or behavior, or if your pet shows any of the following signs

- Abnormal heart rate
- Collapse
- Severe coughing
- Difficulty breathing
- Abnormal sized pupils
- Lethargy
- Weakness or collapse
- Pain
- Pale gums
- Restlessness and panting
- Dry heaving
- Excessive vomiting or vomiting for more than 24 hours
- Muscle tremors or seizures

This list is not all-inclusive. Contact your veterinarian if you notice anything out of the ordinary with your pet.

### First responder basics

Stay calm so you can assess the situation, communicate clearly with your veterinarian and stabilize your pet until you reach a veterinary hospital.

**Put safety first:** Make sure it's safe to enter the area before rushing to aid an injured pet.

**Check the ABCDs—Airway, Breathing, Circulation, Disability:** Check the airway for airflow, check for breathing and heartbeat and assess the level of injury.

**Administer first aid:** Control bleeding, flush burns, immobilize broken limbs, etc

**Get to a veterinary hospital ASAP:** Program into your cell the numbers for your veterinarian, nearest emergency hospital and Pet Poison Helpline **(855-289-0358)**. Call the veterinary hospital to alert them that you're on the way.



# Be prepared

- ✓ Program your phone with numbers for:
  - Your veterinarian
  - 24-hr emergency veterinarian
  - Pet Poison Helpline (855-289-0358)
- ✓ Save a note in your phone with your pet's weight and current medications
- ✓ Sign up for Nationwide pet insurance coverage

## Handling an injured pet

Restrain injured pets with care—even the friendliest ones can bite or scratch when in pain.

## Homemade dog muzzle

You can gently restrain an injured dog using a homemade muzzle.

1. Find a bandage, necktie, length of rag or other piece of long, narrow fabric.
2. Make a loop with the fabric and tie a loose knot at the top of the loop.
3. Loosely encircle the dog's muzzle with the loop until you're safely able to tie the ends under the dog's muzzle.
4. Take your dog in for care, and let your veterinarian safely remove the muzzle.

Never muzzle a dog who is unconscious, has difficulty breathing, is vomiting or has a mouth injury.

**Never muzzle a cat.** Instead, cover the head with a blanket, then use the blanket to gently scoop up the cat.

## Transporting an injured pet

Create a makeshift stretcher by sliding a flat, rigid surface (such as a board or plastic children's sled) under the injured pet. Keep the pet's back and neck as immobilized as possible, and gently restrain using towels or straps.

If you can't make a stretcher, use a towel or blanket to create a hammock. Pull the corners taut to keep the pet as flat as possible.

# Pet Poison Helpline

## 855-289-0358

Available 24/7

Please be advised that a one-time, per-incident consultation fee applies.

## First aid kit essentials

Keep these items in a waterproof container, stored in an accessible location.

- Veterinarian's phone number
- Emergency veterinary hospital phone number
- Pet Poison Helpline phone number (855-289-0358)
- Gauze roll and pads
- Medical tape
- Ruler or other rigid object for splinting
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Thermometer and sterile lubricant
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Rubber or latex exam gloves
- Towel or blanket
- Muzzle
- Elizabethan collar (aka "e-collar" or "cone")
- Triple antibiotic ointment
- Eye wash/flush solution with no cleaners or soaps



## We're here to help

Nationwide<sup>®</sup> offers pet insurance coverage for accidents, illnesses and preventive care.  
**Get a fast, no-obligation quote today.**

This educational pamphlet is provided by Nationwide in coordination with Pet Poison Helpline, an animal poison control center based out of Minneapolis, Minn. Driven by our shared passion for pets, our common goal is to provide pet lovers with valuable information on pet health and safety.

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**855.289.0358**  
[petpoisonhelpline.com](http://petpoisonhelpline.com)

A per incident fee applies.

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