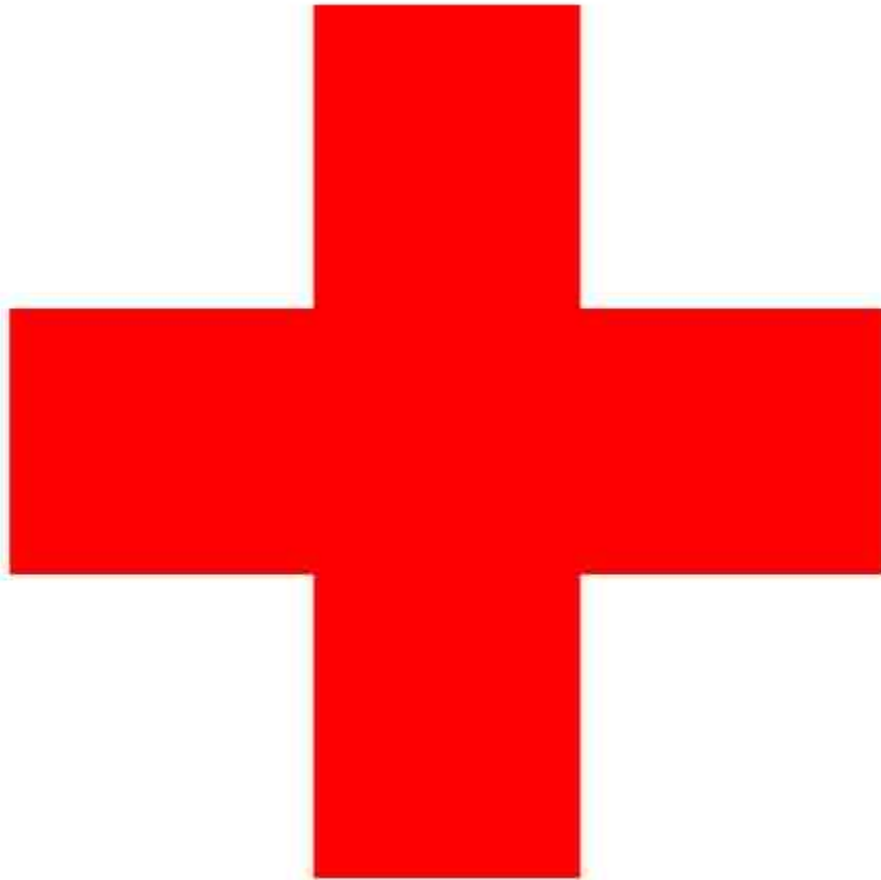


Canine Emergency



First Aid Kit

By Brittany Schaezler, DVM, cVMA

@agilityvet

AgilityVet.com

Canine Emergency First Aid Kit

When an emergency situation arises, the MOST important thing to remember is to call your veterinarian, or the local emergency clinic, as soon as possible. However, you can prepare for minor emergencies by creating a first aid kit and keeping it nearby, especially when travelling with your dog.

Your first aid kit should help you manage minor issues only. If your dog is vomiting, lethargic, bleeding, overheated, or in any other way abnormal, he should be taken to a clinic. In an emergency, time is critical. Quickly assess the situation and if necessary, transport your dog to a vet. Remember, it's much better to seek immediate, appropriate care than to waste time managing an issue in a less than ideal situation.

Here are some useful items to keep in your canine first aid kit.

1. **Bandage material.** This should include 4x4 gauze squares, gauze padding, and self-adhesive bandages (such as VetWrap). Use this to stop any bleeding, and then take your dog to the vet. Significant damage can be done with an improperly placed bandage, so don't delay seeking emergency care.



2. **Scissors.** Handy for cutting bandage material, etc.
3. **Hemostats.** These can be purchased from online catalogs or medical supply stores. Hemostats can be used to remove ticks, bee stingers, and splinters. Carefully avoid poking your dog's eyes.



4. **Triple Antibiotic Ointment.** Use on minor wounds like scrapes or small cuts.

5. **Saline eye flush.** Use to flush your dog's eyes in the case of exposure to noxious chemicals, or to flush out dirt and debris from the eyes or wounds.



6. **Benadryl.** For insect bites or stings, or allergic reactions. Consult with your veterinarian for an appropriate dose for your dog.



7. **Thermometer.** Heat stroke is a serious issue, often seen during the hot summer months. Normal body temperature for a dog is around 100-102.5 degrees. A dog who is working may be in the 103-104 degree range. Heat stroke occurs when the body temperature is 106-109 degrees.



8. **Probiotic.** Some dogs will experience stress when travelling or competing and subsequently develop diarrhea. A probiotic can help keep your dog's gastrointestinal flora normal. I personally prefer canine-specific probiotics, such as Provable.

9. **Nail trimmers and styptic powder.** A common minor emergency I often see in my clinic is the broken or snagged toenail. These can be extremely painful, as the both the blood vessel and nerve are exposed. I often sedate these pets in-clinic, but in a pinch, the nail can be cut above the break, and styptic powder applied to stop the bleeding.



10. **Alcohol pads.** For cleaning up around wounds. Remember, it stings, so use cautiously. Warm, soapy water is a more gentle alternative.



11. **Hydrogen peroxide.** Peroxide can be used to clean deep puncture wounds. Peroxide can also be used to induce vomiting in an emergency situation (when a known toxin has been ingested by your dog and you are far from the nearest emergency clinic), but it is not without risks. I do NOT recommend using hydrogen peroxide to induce vomiting without consulting your veterinarian first.

12. **Muzzle.** When injured or scared, any dog can bite, even your beloved canine companion. A nylon muzzle of the appropriate size can be very helpful when treating your dog in an emergency. If you don't have a muzzle, you can make one from available materials like a leash, bandage material, stocking, etc.



Ticket demonstrating an emergency muzzle

13. **Important phone numbers.** Carry the number of the nearest emergency clinic when you travel, as well as the number to poison control. ASPCA Poison Control is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week for a \$65 consultation fee at (888) 426-4435.