

# ***First Aid for Pets:***

## ***What Every Owner Should Know***

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# First Aid for Pets

- ◆ Trauma
- ◆ Seizures
- ◆ Poisoning
- ◆ Burns and Smoke Inhalation
- ◆ Allergic Reactions
- ◆ Heat Stroke
- ◆ CPR
  - When
  - How
  - Choking

# Trauma

- ◆ Types of Trauma
  - Vehicular trauma
  - Falling
  - Hit with objects
  - Bite wounds
  - Weapons



# Trauma

- ◆ Approach the pet with caution
  - Remember he/she is very painful
  - Makeshift Muzzles
    - Pantyhose
    - Tie
    - Leash
    - Ace bandage
  - Remove muzzle once they are in the car



# Trauma

## ◆ Initial Wound Care

- Prevent/slow blood loss
- Minimize further contamination of the wound
- Apply a bandage
- Apply pressure
- This should only take a few minutes
- **Do not remove penetrating objects**

# Transporting Trauma Patients

- ◆ Provide support as your pet climbs into the car
- ◆ If your pet is unable to walk, use a sheet or blanket as a stretcher
- ◆ Have someone familiar sit with the pet in transport



# Transporting Trauma Patients

## ◆ Cats

- Remember they are very scared and often difficult to handle
- Use a towel or thick blanket
  - “Kitty Burrito”
- Place in a box with a lid
  - Don’t try to force them into a carrier
  - Secure the lid!



# Transporting the Trauma Patient



- ◆ Spinal cord injury, broken back or neck
- ◆ Rigid board
- ◆ Tape, cloth, bandage material to immobilize
- ◆ Support the neck, chest and hind end
  - Be careful not to make the strap across the chest too tight

# Seizures

- ◆ Disturbance of normal electrical activity in the brain which results in a “seizure event”
  - *Focal or partial seizure*
    - Involuntary muscle activity of one body region
    - Example: Staring with facial twitching

# Seizures

- ◆ Disturbance of normal electrical activity in the brain which results in a “seizure event”
  - *Focal or partial seizure*
  - *Generalized seizure*
    - Involuntary muscle activity affecting the entire body simultaneously
    - Example: Unconscious, collapsed with violent, whole body movement

# Seizures

- ◆ Disturbance of normal electrical activity in the brain which results in a “seizure event”
  - *Focal or partial seizure*
  - *Generalized seizure*
  - *Post-ictal stage*
    - The pet is disoriented and uncoordinated, but alert and responsive

# Seizures

- ◆ Pets with existing seizure disorder

- Hospitalization is necessary if:

- ✓ *Cluster Seizures*: The seizure recurs in a short period of time

- ✓ *Status Epilepticus*: The seizure lasts more than 5 minutes

- ◆ Pets who have never had a seizure

- Hospitalization is always recommended

# Seizures

## What's the Problem?

### ◆ Dangerous surroundings

- Stairs
- Heavy objects
- Hot objects

### ◆ Length of the seizure

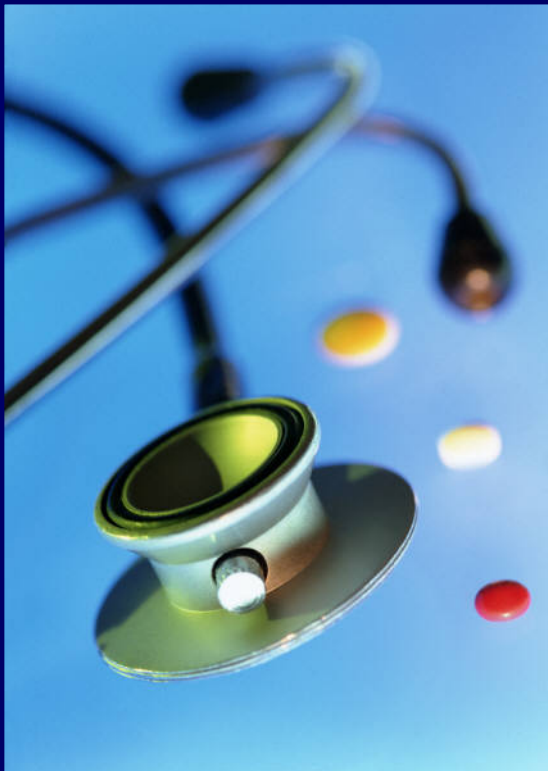
- Secondary injury
  - High body temperature
  - Brain Swelling



# Seizures

- ◆ Prevent injury
  - Block off stairs
  - Move potentially dangerous objects
- ◆ Be careful not to get bitten
  - Do not try to pull out the tongue or place objects in the mouth
  - Don't cradle them like a baby
  - Don't try to hold them down
- ◆ Transport them to the hospital

# Toxicities



- ◆ Ingestion of substances which can cause a potentially life threatening situation
- ◆ Topical application of over the counter flea and tick products
- ◆ Wide range of clinical signs

# Toxicities

## ◆ Call Animal Poison Control

(888) 426-4435

There is a \$50.00 fee

## ◆ Induce vomiting

- Ingestion was witnessed and less than 4 hours
- The pet is alert
- Be sure the substance is one where vomiting is not harmful (Ex: Corrosive substances)

# Toxicities

- ◆ Induce vomiting
  - Hydrogen Peroxide
    - ✓ Dose: 1-2 tsp/10 lbs
    - ✓ Repeat dose *ONCE* if vomiting does not occur within 15 minutes
- ◆ Transport to hospital for further decontamination and supportive care if indicated
- ◆ Bring the case number assigned by animal poison control

# Toxicities

- ◆ Ethylene glycol  
AKA: Anti-freeze
- ◆ Rodenticides  
AKA: Rat and mouse poison
- ◆ Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication
- ◆ Cats who ingested Lilly of the Valley

*The sooner your pet is seen by a veterinarian, the better the chance for a positive outcome*

# Burns and Smoke Inhalation



## ◆ Wound Care

- Place a wet, cool cloth (NOT COLD) over the burn sites
- Change the cloth in transport if it becomes warm
- Cover the site to prevent contamination

# Burns and Smoke Inhalation



- ◆ If it is possible provide oxygen at the scene
- ◆ Transport to hospital as soon as possible

# Allergic Reactions

## ◆ Common Causes

- Bites of venomous insects and reptiles
- Vaccines
- Antibiotics/medication
- Topical flea/tick preventative, heartworm preventative

## ◆ Usually occurs immediately

- Seconds to minutes
- Delayed for several hours

# Allergic Reactions

## ◆ Systemic

- Closing of the airways
- Shock
- Bleeding

## ◆ Local

- Hives
- Swelling



# Allergic Reactions

## ◆ Diphenhydramine (Benadryl®)

- Do not try to give if the pet is lethargic or showing evidence of trouble breathing
- Dose : 1 mg/lb
- 25 mg tablets or an elixir 12.5 mg per tsp
- Be sure it is not Benadryl Allergy®

## ◆ Call the hospital

## ◆ Transport to the hospital for further care

# Heat Stroke

- ◆ Severe elevation in body temperature due to exposure to high ambient temperatures
- ◆ Common Causes
  - Confining pets to automobiles
  - Leaving them outside with no shade or water
  - Exercise on hot, humid days or early in the warm weather season

# Heat Stroke

## ◆ Predisposing Factors

- High environmental temperatures
- Lack of acclimation to warm weather
- Exercise on hot, humid days
- Obesity
- Pets with breathing abnormalities
- Previous heatstroke

# Heat Stroke

## ◆ What are the signs?

- History of predisposing factors
- Excessive panting
- Brick red gums
- Warm to the touch
- Collapse
- Vomiting/Diarrhea
- Seizures or Coma



# Heat Stroke

- ◆ Prevention

- ◆ Treatment

- Move the pet to a cooler environment
- Cool water, NOT COLD applied to the abdomen, feet, under the arm, between the legs, on the neck
- Place them in front of a fan or in air conditioning
- Transport to the hospital for evaluation, supportive care and further treatment

# Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

- ◆ When is it necessary
  - The pet is unconscious and not breathing
    - ✓ The chest is not moving
    - ✓ The gums are blue or white
  - A heartbeat can not be heard
    - ✓ Listen for a heart beat
    - ✓ Check for a pulse

# Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

- ◆ If the pet is not breathing
  - Lie the animal on its side
  - Open the mouth, pull the tongue forward and out
  - Extend the neck forward
  - Check the airway for foreign objects, holding the tongue out and forward
  - Hold jaw closed and give 5-6 breaths into both nostrils



# Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

- ◆ If there is no response, check for a pulse and audible heart beat
- ◆ If there is no pulse or heart beat, begin cardiac compressions
  - Find the widest part of the chest cavity and depress it by 2 - 3 inches
  - If alone: 1 breath to every 5 – 7 compressions
  - If there is a second person:
    - Compress 80-100 times/minute
    - Breathe 16-20 breaths/minute

# Choking

- ◆ How do know your pet is choking?
  - Usually involves a known source
  - Gums are blue
  - No noise (Whining, coughing, snorting)
  - Leaning forward with neck extended and front legs are pointed outward
  - Lose consciousness

# Choking

- ◆ Pull the tongue forward and check the airway for a foreign object
- ◆ If the object can not be reached
  - Heimlich maneuver
    - Small pets
    - Larger pets
    - 3 quick maneuvers
    - Swipe the airway



# Summary

## ◆ Key Points to Remember

- Remain calm
- Check your pet and treat as needed
- Get help to transport your larger pet
- Be safe!
- If possible, call the hospital in transit

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→ EMERGENCY

MAIN ENTRANCE

THE  
END

Thank You  
Any Questions?

