
An Owner's Manual to:
**EMERGENCY
FIRST AID
FOR DOGS**

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB



TABLE OF CONTENTS

About this series - 3

Before you start - 4

What to do - 7

Get the tools - 12

Online resources at AKC.org - 14

Other books in the series - 15

ABOUT THIS SERIES

At the AKC, we know better than anyone that your dog can't be treated like a car or an appliance, but we've named this series "An Owner's Manual" because sometimes you probably wish your lovable companions came with one.

These concise guides give you the tools, tips, and direction to be a responsible and confident dog owner who brings out the best in your dog. Give them a test drive!



chapter one
BEFORE YOU START

emergency

FIRST AID FOR DOGS

Even the most responsible pet owner can't always protect their pet from a sudden accident or illness. Getting your pet immediate medical attention can be the difference between life and death. But having knowledge of basic first aid and being equipped with the right tools can play an invaluable role in helping to save your pet's life or reduce the severity of the injury.

Remember that at-home first aid does not replace professional veterinary care. If your pet is injured, sick, or has ingested something suspicious, contact your veterinarian immediately.

Tip: When helping an injured animal, make sure he's properly restrained (or fitted with a muzzle, if possible, unless he's choking). When an animal is scared, he is more likely to bite.



Previous page: ©ChrisBoswell/Thinkstock; this page: ©Chalabala/Thinkstock

BE PREPARED

Be Prepared: Make sure you have the following numbers handy (such as on the fridge or saved into your cell phone):

- Veterinarian
- Emergency veterinarian
- Pet Poison Helpline: 855-764-7661



©anyaberkut/Thinkstock



chapter two
WHAT TO DO

WHAT TO DO

CUTS AND WOUNDS

Using a facecloth, gauze pad, or even a sanitary napkin as a compress, apply direct pressure on the injury to help control the bleeding. Hold the compress in place with your hand or by bandaging it on top of the wound. If blood soaks through, simply add another compress on top rather than pulling it off as this may disturb the blood clot.

Once the bleeding has stopped, clean the wound with warm water and an antibacterial product (e.g., soap or hydrogen peroxide). Then, carefully pat the wound dry with sterile gauze or a clean cloth.

Finally, cover the wound. Start with gauze, a sanitary napkin, or a dressing pad (like Kendall Telfa). Hold it in place with strip gauze wrapped around the leg. Finish with an adhesive bandage that sticks to the hair. Get the wound evaluated by a veterinarian as soon as possible—some wounds require continued bandaging and antibiotic therapy; others need suturing.



Previous page: ©brozova/Thinkstock; this page: ©zoran simin/Thinkstock

WHAT TO DO

BURNS

If your pet gets a burn, apply cool (not ice cold), wet compresses to the injury site for at least 30 minutes. Change it frequently to ensure it stays cool, and have it evaluated by your veterinarian. Severe burns should be considered an emergency and medical care sought instantly.

INGESTION OR EXPOSURE TO HARMFUL CHEMICALS

If you suspect your dog has eaten something toxic—rodenticide, household cleaner, or antifreeze, for example—it's important to call your veterinarian and/or the pet poison hotline immediately (there is a charge for the service, but it is worth it—you will speak to experts in pets and poisons who your veterinarian may even need to consult with). It might be necessary to make your pet vomit (if he's eaten something), or you might have to dilute the exposed area. If possible, bring the chemical or object to the veterinarian with you.

WHAT TO DO

SEIZURES

If your dog is having a seizure, it's important to keep him from harming himself on an object or by falling off furniture. Be careful, though, as a dog having a seizure may bite without realizing what he's doing. If you don't know the cause of your dog's seizure, call your veterinarian immediately after—sometimes a seizure can be caused by another problem that needs immediate attention, like low blood sugar. <http://www.woofipedia.com/articles/what-to-do-if-your-dog-has-a-seizure>

CHOKING

If your pet is choking, open his mouth and look inside. If you see food or a foreign object, remove it with your fingers or tweezers but only if you can do it quickly without lodging it deeper into the throat or causing injury. If that doesn't work, you can pick a small dog up by the thighs and hold him upside down while gently shaking him. This should not be attempted with a large dog—instead keep his paws on the ground and lift his back legs.

As a last resort, you may need to perform a doggy Heimlich. Make a fist and press down and up on the dog's abdomen. Lay him on his side after. If he is unconscious, you can do this with the dog on his side. The Heimlich should only be attempted in a true emergency—as in humans, it can lead to injuries if done incorrectly.

WHAT TO DO

SHOCK

Blood loss, allergic reactions, poisonings, and even intense pain can all cause a severe drop in blood pressure, which triggers shock. The first step in shock treatment is to keep your dog warm by covering him with blankets. If you are outside, get your dog into a car and turn the heat up. Once you arrive at the hospital, your veterinarian will give intravenous fluids to boost blood pressure.

SIGNS OF SHOCK

- A change in pulse. Check the femoral artery, which courses from the top of the hind leg down the center. Do this when your dog is healthy to see what is normal. During shock, the pulse changes to rapid and weak.
- Pale gums. When your pet is healthy, the gums will be pink. Pale pink or white gums reflect poor circulation.
- Body temperature also falls during shock (normal is 100.4 to 103.1 degrees Fahrenheit). In later stages, your pet can become weak or unresponsive. When a pet is in shock, it is a medical emergency. The brain and heart are at risk of not getting enough blood, and if untreated it can be fatal.



chapter three
GET THE TOOLS

get the **TOOLS**

GET THE PREVENTIVE TOOLS:

AKC's new product [WOOFtale](#) will monitor your pet's health and has a GPS feature so you know faster when something is wrong. Find out more at [wooftale.com](#).

Also, training your dog can be a lifesaver if you need him to "Leave It" or "Come" when in harm's way. The [AKC GoodDog! Helpline](#) can assist you in teaching these important commands. Learn more at [shop.woofipedia.com](#).

Also, the Red Cross offers a Pet First Aid app that's available for download (small fee applies). Search for it on your phone's app store.



THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

The AKC is a not-for-profit organization and the largest purebred dog registry in the world. We are the sports-governing body for over 22,000 dog events a year, including conformation (dog shows) and exciting sports like agility, obedience, rally, tracking, lure coursing, earthdog, herding trials, among others.

But the AKC is so much more. Here are just some of the ways we support and enrich the lives of dogs—purebreds and mixed-breeds alike—and their families.

[AKC Humane Fund](#), supports breed rescue activities, assists shelters that permit domestic-abuse victims to bring their pets, and educates dog lovers about responsible dog ownership.

[Canine Good Citizen®](#) program : A 10-step test that certifies dogs who have good manners at home and in their community. Over 600,000 dogs across the United States have become Canine Good Citizens , and 42 states have passed resolutions recognizing the program's merit and importance.

[AKC Reunite](#) has brought more than 400,000 lost pets back together with their owners.

The [AKC Canine Health Foundation](#), funds research projects and clinical studies. Since 1995 the AKC has donated over \$24 million to the CHF. (The AKC is the only registry that incorporates health-screening results into its permanent dog records.)

[AKC](#) conducts thousands of kennel inspections annually to monitor care and conditions at kennels across the country and ensure the integrity of the AKC registry.

We offer the largest, most comprehensive set of DNA programs for parentage verification and genetic identity to ensure reliable registration records.

AKC supports one of the world's largest collections of dog-related fine art and artifacts at the [AKC Museum of the Dog](#).

We have the world's largest [dog library](#) at AKC headquarters in New York, both of which are open to the public.

THANK YOU FOR READING

We hope this information was valuable to you in helping your puppy live a long, healthy, happy life. Below, find additional books in our Owner's Manual series designed to strengthen the bond between you and your furry family member.

