

# Making a First Aid Kit for Your Cat

*Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff*

Since you never know when an accident will happen, keeping a pet emergency kit at your home is a good idea. You can put a first aid kit together yourself and buy the items separately, or buy one ready-made. If you make one yourself, use a small plastic tub with a tight fitting lid to store the following items:

## Important Phone Numbers

- Veterinary clinic phone number and directions to the clinic
- Emergency clinic phone number and directions
- Poison control center phone numbers

## Equipment and Supplies

- Muzzle
- Magnifying glass
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Nail clippers and metal nail file
- Styptic powder or sticks, Kwik Stop, or cornstarch
- Penlight
- Eye dropper or oral syringe
- Feeding tubes of various sizes if you are trained in how to use them
- Cotton swabs
- Cotton balls
- Clean towels - cloth and paper
- Rectal thermometer
- Lubricant such as mineral oil or KY Jelly (without spermicide)
- Disposable gloves
- Syringes of various sizes
- Needle-nose pliers or hemostats
- Grease-cutting dish soap
- Bitter Apple or other product to discourage licking
- Pet carrier
- Towel or blanket to keep your cat warm during transport (some pharmacies and camping outlets carry a thermal blanket)
- Cold packs and heat packs (wrap in towel before using)
- Stethoscope

## Bandaging Materials

- Square gauze of various sizes - some sterile
- Non-stick pads
- First aid tape - both paper (easily comes off of skin) and adhesive types
- Bandage rolls - gauze and Vetwrap
- Band-Aids (for humans)

## Nutritional Support

- Rehydrating solution such as Gatorade or Pedialyte
- Nutritional supplement such as Nutri-Cal, Vitacal, or Nutristat
- High sugar source: Karo syrup

## Medicines\*

- Wound disinfectant such as Betadine or Nolvasan
- Triple antibiotic ointment for skin
- Antibiotic ophthalmic ointment for eyes, e.g., Terramycin
- Eye wash solution
- Sterile saline
- Antidiarrheal medicine such as Pet Pectate
- Cat laxative in paste form (e.g.; Doctor's Foster & Smith Hairball Remedy, Laxatone)
- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) for allergic reactions
- Cortisone spray or cream, such as Itch Stop
- Ear cleaning solution
- Hydrogen peroxide (used to make a pet vomit)
- Activated charcoal to absorb ingested poisons (consult your veterinarian before using)

\*Watch the expiration dates on any medication, and replace as needed.

## Making an Evacuation Kit for Your Cat

*Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff*

### Food and Water

- Food: Two weeks supply; place dry food in airtight containers (rotate every 3 months)
- Usual treats (rotate every 3 months)
- Water: Two weeks supply of water (store in dark place, rotate every 2 months). Estimate a quart a day.
- Food and water dishes
- Spoons and can opener, if necessary

### Restraint and Identification

- Extra collars or harnesses with tags (identification tag, rabies tag, license)
- Leashes, including a nylon slip leash
- Towels
- Muzzle
- Thick leather gloves (in case your cat is injured or very afraid)
- Pet life preserver (if in a flood zone)
- Cat carrier with the following information indelibly printed: your name; phone number; address; a description of your cat (distinguishing marks, age, breed, sex, spayed, neutered, etc.); the name of your cat; microchip ID or tattoo ID, if any; pet insurance policy number; and the address and phone number where you or a contact person can be reached if you are not at home

### Care and Comfort

- Blanket
- Toys
- Hot water bottle
- Flashlight and batteries
- Grooming supplies
- Dental cleaning supplies
- Feliway (spray product that helps reduce anxiety in cats)

### Records and Medications (store in a waterproof container)

- Vaccination certificates
- List of phone numbers:
  - Your veterinarian
  - List of secondary veterinarians
  - "Pet-friendly" motels
  - Boarding facilities (Red Cross shelters do not allow animals)
  - Emergency clinic(s)
  - Database centers if your cat is tattooed or has a microchip
  - Animal poison control center(s)
  - Animal shelters in your area (in case you get separated from your pet)
- Pet insurance policy number
- Copies of proof of ownership papers (registration information, adoption papers, proofs of purchase, and microchip/tattoo information to store in the evacuation kit). List each of your

- Recent photographs with the same information that is on the cat carrier printed on the back (keep in a waterproof container, e.g., inside several ziplock bags). Include yourself in some of the photos to help you reclaim your pet, should he become lost.
- Wire, pliers, and duct tape (to repair cat carrier)

#### Sanitation

- Small litter pan, litter, and scoop
- Newspaper
- Paper towels
- Dish soap
- Disinfectant
- Garbage bags
- Plastic bags for holding waste (two weeks supply)

animals and their species/breed, age, sex, color, and other distinguishing characteristics.

- Medical records and/or list of medical needs, if your cat has a medical condition or is on medication
- Two weeks supply of medication and any supplements (include at least one dose of your monthly heartworm preventive) in a waterproof container (rotate every two months); have chemical ice packs and a small, insulated cooler if medication needs refrigeration
- If your cat is taking medication regularly, include that information on a separate ID tag
- First aid kit

A large plastic tub or garbage can with a lid can be used to store these disaster preparedness items for your cat. Tape a copy of this list to the inside of the cover for future reference. Include a calendar indicating when certain items should be/were replaced.

In addition to the items listed above, include anything you use for your cat on a weekly or monthly basis. A good idea is to collect all the materials for your disaster preparedness kit, and then experiment by using only those items to care for your cat the next two weeks. That way, you will easily find out if you need to include other items, or a larger quantity of certain things.

## Making a First Aid Kit for Your Dog

*Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff*

Since you never know when an accident will happen, keeping a pet emergency kit at your home is a good idea. A smaller kit could be used in the car. You can put a first aid kit together yourself and buy the items separately, or buy one ready-made. If you make one yourself, use a small plastic tub with a tight fitting lid to store the following items:

### Important Phone Numbers

- Veterinary clinic phone number and directions to the clinic
- Emergency clinic phone number and directions
- Poison control center phone numbers

### Equipment and Supplies

- Muzzle, or roll of gauze for making a muzzle
- Magnifying glass
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Nail clippers and metal nail file
- Styptic powder or sticks, Kwik Stop, or cornstarch
- Penlight
- Nylon slip leash
- Eye dropper or oral syringe
- Cotton swabs
- Cotton balls
- Clean towels - cloth and paper
- Rectal thermometer
- Lubricant such as mineral oil or KY Jelly (without spermicide)
- Disposable gloves
- Syringes of various sizes
- Needle-nose pliers or hemostats
- Grease-cutting dish soap
- Bitter Apple or other product to discourage licking
- Pet carrier

### Bandaging Materials

- Square gauze of various sizes - some sterile
- Non-stick pads
- First aid tape - both paper (easily comes off of skin) and adhesive types
- Bandage rolls - gauze and Vetwrap
- Band-Aids (for humans)

### Nutritional Support

- Rehydrating solution such as Gatorade or Pedialyte
- Nutritional supplement such as Nutri-Cal, Vitacal, or Nutristat
- High sugar source: Karo syrup

### Medicines\*

- Wound disinfectant such as Betadine or Nolvasan
- Triple antibiotic ointment for skin
- Antibiotic ophthalmic ointment for eyes, e.g., Terramycin
- Eye wash solution
- Sterile saline
- Antidiarrheal medicine such as Pet Pectate
- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) for allergic reactions (obtain dose from your veterinarian)
- Cortisone spray or cream, such as Itch Stop
- Ear cleaning solution
- Hydrogen peroxide (used to make

- Towel or blanket to use as a stretcher, another to keep your dog warm during transport (some pharmacies and camping outlets carry a thermal blanket)
- Cold packs and heat packs (wrap in towel before using)
- Stethoscope

a dog vomit - only use as directed by a veterinarian)

- Activated charcoal to absorb ingested poisons (consult your veterinarian before using)

\*Watch the expiration dates on any medication, and replace as needed.

# An Evacuation Kit for Your Dog

Holly Nash, DVM, MS

Veterinary Services Department, Drs. Foster & Smith, Inc.

## Food and Water

- Food: Two weeks supply; place dry food in airtight containers (rotate every 3 months)
- Usual treats (rotate every 3 months)
- Water: Two weeks supply of water (store in dark place, rotate every 2 months). Estimate a quart a day.
- Food and water dishes
- Spoons and can opener, if necessary

## Restraint and Identification

- Extra collars or harnesses with tags (identification tag, rabies tag, license)
- Leashes, including a nylon slip leash
- Towels
- Muzzle or roll of gauze to make a muzzle (in case your dog is injured)
- Thick leather gloves (in case your dog is injured or very afraid)
- Dog life preserver (if in a flood zone)
- Pet carrier with the following information indelibly printed: your name; phone number; address; a description of your dog (distinguishing marks, age, breed, sex, spayed, neutered, etc.); the name of your dog; microchip ID or tattoo ID, if any; pet insurance policy number; and the address and phone number where you or a contact person can be reached if you are not at home
- Recent photographs with the same information that is on the pet carrier printed on the back (keep in a waterproof container, e.g., inside several ziplock bags). Include yourself in some of the photos to help you reclaim your pet, should he become lost.
- Wire, pliers, and duct tape (to repair pet carrier)

## Sanitation

- Newspaper
- Paper towels
- Dish soap
- Disinfectant
- Garbage bags
- Plastic bags for holding waste (two weeks supply)

## Care and Comfort

- Blanket
- Toys and chew toys
- Hot water bottle
- Flashlight and batteries
- Grooming supplies
- Dental cleaning supplies

## Records and Medications (store in a waterproof container)

- Vaccination certificates
- List of phone numbers:
  - Your veterinarian
  - List of secondary veterinarians
  - "Pet-friendly" motels
  - Boarding facilities (Red Cross shelters do not allow animals)
  - Emergency clinic(s)
  - Database centers if your dog is tattooed or has a microchip
  - Animal poison control center(s)
  - Animal shelters in your area (in case you get separated from your pet)
- Pet insurance policy number
- Copies of proof of ownership papers (registration information, adoption papers, proofs of purchase, and microchip/tattoo information to store in the evacuation kit). List each of your animals and their species/breed, age, sex, color, and other distinguishing characteristics.
- Medical records and/or list of medical needs, if your dog has a medical condition or is on medication
- Two weeks supply of medication and any supplements (include at least one dose of your monthly heartworm preventive) in a waterproof container (rotate every two months); have chemical ice packs and a small, insulated cooler if medication needs

## refrigeration

- If your dog is taking medication regularly, include that information on a separate ID tag
- If your dog becomes fearful during storms, sudden changes in routine, or separation from you, contact your veterinarian regarding tranquilizers or calming remedies that could be included in your kit (e.g., Rescue Remedy)
- First aid kit

A large plastic tub or garbage can with a lid can be used to store these disaster preparedness items for your dog. Tape a copy of this list to the inside of the cover for future reference. Include a calendar indicating when certain items should be/were replaced.

In addition to the items listed above, include anything you use for your dog on a weekly or monthly basis. A good idea is to collect all the materials for your disaster preparedness kit, and then experiment by using only those items to care for your dog the next two weeks. That way, you will easily find out if you need to include other items, or a larger quantity of certain things.

# A simple first aid kit

## Basic supplies

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Dog owners can treat minor injuries for their pets if they have the appropriate remedies, tools, and equipment available. The following items were included in a first aid kit that the Cincinnati Veterinary Medical Association gave to police dog handlers at a recent workshop. A home first aid kit needs many of the same items.

- **Gauze sponges** -- 50 four-by-four inch sponges, two per envelope
- **Triple antibiotic ointment**
- **Rubbing alcohol**
- **Ear syringe** -- two ounce capacity
- **Ace self-adhering athletic bandage** -- three-inch width
- **White petroleum jelly** (Vaseline or similar)
- **Eye wash**
- **Sterile, non-adherent pads**
- **Pepto Bismol tablets**
- **Generic Benadryl capsules** -- 25mg, for allergies
- **Hydrocortisone acetate** -- one percent cream
- **Sterile stretch gauze bandage** -- three inches by four yards
- **Buffered aspirin**
- **Dermicil hypoallergenic cloth tape** one inch by 10 yards
- **Hydrogen peroxide**
- **Kaopectate tablets** maximum strength
- **Bandage scissors**
- **Custom splints**
- **Vet Rap bandage**

Other suggested items were:

- **Blanket**
  - **Tweezers**
  - **Muzzle**
  - **Hemostats**
  - **Rectal thermometer**
  - **Ziplock bags**
  - **Paperwork**, including the dog's health record, medications, local and national poison control numbers, regular veterinary clinic hours and telephone numbers, and emergency clinic hours and telephone number.
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## ***Tools***

Any animal in pain, even your dog, may snap at you or try to bite as you clean a scrape or close a wound. The first thing you should do is muzzle her. You can purchase a muzzle, or take strips of pantihose or other material to tie around her snout. Learn how to [muzzle and restrain](#) your dog.

Other necessary tools for your dog first aid supplies include the following.

- Needle and thread, or a skin stapler
- Razor blade (paper wrapped for protection)
- Small blunt end scissors
- Tweezers
- Hemostat forceps
- Rectal thermometer made specifically for dogs
- Tongue depressors or ice cream sticks (can also be used as splints)
- Oral syringe (3 cc) for administering liquid oral medicines, or for getting an ear drying solution into your dog's ears
- Eye dropper (instead of the syringe)
- Oral syringe (10 cc) for cleaning and flushing wounds
- Safety pins in several sizes
- Small empty containers for pain pills and medications
- Rubber gloves
- Instant ice compress
- Tourniquet
- Splints
- Washcloth
- Nail trimmers

## ***Supplies for External Use***

Your dog is likely to suffer from far more external injuries than internal injuries or illnesses. These can range from scrapes and scratches, to bites and stings, to open wounds and punctures. These dog first aid supplies will help you clean and stabilize any wound, small or large.

- Sterile non-stick pads (2" x 4")
- Cotton gauze pads
- Cotton gauze wrap (1.5" width and/or 3" width)
- VetWrap™ (2" width and/or 4" width)
- Ace bandage (self adhering)
- Regular Band-Aids
- New Skin liquid bandage or "Mole Skin" (to quickly repair splits in pads)
- First aid tape or 1" vet tape
- Cotton balls and swabs
- Small bottle of isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol
- Alcohol or antiseptic wipes (the ones that come in small individual packets)
- Bottle (at least 8 ounces/225 ml) of 3% hydrogen peroxide (for cleaning wounds and to [induce vomiting](#) when necessary)
- Iodine wash
- Eye wash

- Antibiotic ointment (Neosporin, Bacitracin, Betadine or generic)
- Ophthalmic (eye) antibiotic ointment
- Small jar of Vaseline

If you live in, or plan to visit, tick country, add one or two small plastic bottles with tight seals to your dog first aid supplies. Before you go, label them "Ticks" and partially fill them with rubbing alcohol.

If you find a tick on yourself or your dog, remove it and put it into one of these bottles. The alcohol will kill and preserve the tick in case identification is required later.

## ***Supplies for Internal Use***

Your dog may, at some point, eat something toxic or that doesn't agree with her. These dog first aid supplies will help with most GI and poisoning problems.

- Activated charcoal (for absorption of ingested toxic substances)
- Syrup of Ipecac (to induce vomiting; **do not** use if your dog has ingested acids, alkalis, or petroleum products) — use **only** syrup of Ipecac; forms other than syrup can be fatal to dogs and humans
- Hydrogen peroxide (to induce vomiting; **do not** use if your dog has ingested acids, alkalis, or petroleum products)
- Anti-gas tablets (for digestive problems)
- Imodium tablets or generic brand (for diarrhea)
- Pepto Bismol tablets (for digestive trouble)
- Kaopectate or generic brand

These items will help you relieve your dog's pain or allergy symptoms.

- Buffered aspirin or ascriptin (5 grain, use a child's dose)

Never give your dog Tylenol (liver problems) or ibuprofen (can be fatal). Consult with your veterinarian when collecting your dog first aid supplies about the correct dosage for any "human" painkillers you want to use

- Benadryl 25 mg tabs or generic brand (for allergic reactions; use a child's dose)

Always keep on hand as part of your dog first aid supplies a small amount of any prescription or non-prescription medicine your dog needs regularly (remember to rotate this at least monthly).

## ***Items To Comfort Your Dog***

These items will keep your dog warm if needed. If your dog is injured, she may suffer from shock; any of these items will help control the symptoms.

- A towel and a blanket (folded as a pillow for her head or to keep body parts elevated; useful as a [makeshift gurney](#) for carrying her to the car)
- "Space" blanket or other heat-reflective blanket

## ***Optional and Miscellaneous Supplies***

The following dog first aid supplies are useful to keep in a home kit. Consider taking all or some of them if you go travelling.

- An eye ointment
- An ointment for ear infections
- An ear cleaning solution (Epi-Otic, Nolvasan Otic, or your favourite)
- An ear drying solution
- Epsom salts
- Hot spot remedy ingredients

If you've ever tried to do any fine detail work in low-light conditions, you know the value of having a candle or flashlight with you. If you always have a light source with you anyway, you won't need to include one with your other dog first aid supplies.

- Small flashlight
- Matches
- Small candle
- Small hair trimming scissors
- Latex (rubber) gloves
- Measuring spoons
- Iodine tablets (if you hike or camp, water may not be safe for drinking without treatment or boiling)
- Otoscope (for examining your dog's ears)

## ***The Container***

A suitable container is a very important part of your dog first aid kit. You need a container that's big enough to fit all the dog first aid supplies you've purchased. It should also give you access to everything inside. At the same time, it needs to be small enough that you won't begrudge taking it with you when you travel.

You might want to consider creating two kits: a smaller one with only the essentials for use when you're out for a walk or at the beach, and a larger, more complete kit with the dog first aid supplies to handle just about any emergency.

For a small kit with just the essentials, useful when out for a walk or a day at the beach or park, consider a red or other light-coloured fanny pack. Use one with multiple pockets. Many today come with four or more pockets, two large ones in the main section, and a smaller one on either side. The small ones are useful for carrying pills and medications.

For a larger kit for home or travel use, consider a nylon briefcase with zippers down the sides. Buy a red one, or one in another light colour. Most come with a large interior compartment, a large exterior compartment in the back, and another one in the flap. They also come with small pockets and pen holders. The pen holders are useful for scissors, tweezers and forceps, while the pockets can hold bandages, a washcloth, or cotton swabs.

If you take your dog hunting, or enter a lot of agility competitions, you may need a more extensive list of dog first aid supplies, and a larger box to fit them. Consider using a fishing tackle box. These boxes have trays that lift up and out when the lid is opened, giving access to the lower compartment. The trays are useful for the smaller objects, while the main compartment can hold the bottles, tools and bulkier items.

Many tackle boxes are black plastic. Scout around for one in a lighter colour, grey or green. You want to be able to label your first aid kit with a permanent marker. A black box will require white markings with paint or correction fluid.

### ***Include Important Information***

On the outside of your fanny pack, briefcase or tackle box, with permanent marker, write "Dog First Aid" on all exposed sides. This will help others locate and use your kit should the need arise.

Create a card with the following information, then carry it inside your fanny pack, tape it to the back of the large inside compartment of your briefcase, or tape it to the inside of the tackle box lid.

- Your name, address and phone number
- Name and phone number of a contact person, who, in an emergency, will take care of your dog if you cannot
- Your dog's name and information about any medications she takes (including dose and frequency), any allergies or significant medical conditions she has
- Name and phone number of your veterinarian

Create another card to tape alongside the contact and medical information. On this one, write a list of common medications and preparations, such as pain relievers, along with their general dosages, and the **specific** dose for **your** dog, based on her weight.

With your dog's specific dose requirements listed, you won't have to try to do the math in your head, or fumble around with a calculator, when you should be concentrating on treating your companion.

- Aspirin 5 mg per pound every 12 hours
- Benadryl 1 - 2 mg per pound every 8 hours
- Imodium 1 mg per 15 pounds 1-2 times daily
- Kaopectate 5 ml per 5 pounds every 2 hours
- Mineral oil (as a laxative) 5 - 30 ml per day, but do not use it long-term
- Pepto Bismol 5 ml per 25 pounds every 6 hours
- Hydrogen peroxide (to induce vomiting) 5 ml per 10 pounds; give a second dose after 10 minutes; **do not** give a third dose

Have your veterinarian confirm the dosages before you use any of them. If the symptoms you are treating persist, consult your vet immediately as the problem may be more serious than you first thought.

Tylenol can cause liver problems in dogs, so do not use it instead of aspirin. Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, Nuprin, etc.) is fatal to dogs at low doses. Use only aspirin

for relieving your dog's pain. Aspirin can cause stomach ulcers in your dog, so watch her closely for signs of stomach upset. Use buffered aspirin or ascriptin to minimize these stomach problems.

Also keep copies of your dog's medical information in your kit, including vaccination records, her rabies certificate, and any medications that she needs. If you travel a lot with your dog, consider making a separate package of records for each car. See [Information and Records](#) for more on what types of information you'll need for emergencies.

Invest some time packing and repacking the fanny pack, briefcase or tackle box. Ensure that the most commonly used dog first aid supplies, like the bandages and antibiotic ointment or cream, are near the top or in an accessible pocket.