



EMERGENCY GUIDE



SPECIALTY AND 24/7/365 EMERGENCY CARE

RedBankVet.com

ABOUT US

Red Bank Veterinary Hospitals has provided this guide to be a resource for you and your family in the event of a veterinary emergency.

Our family of emergency and specialty hospitals provides 24-hour emergency and critical care 365 days a year. This service is open to all pets that are in need of immediate medical attention, even if we are not your pet's primary healthcare provider. Experienced veterinarians and technicians are on premises at all times and are equipped to handle a wide range of medical and surgical emergencies.

Patient care and client satisfaction are our top priorities. We understand that each pet is accompanied by a concerned owner. Our staff will take the time to comfort and care for both of you.

HELP IN AN EMERGENCY

If you think your pet is sick or injured and you're not sure what to do, contact the Red Bank emergency hospital nearest to you. One of our experienced triage technicians will help assess the situation and determine whether your pet needs to be seen urgently. We are fully staffed and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Our emergency teams are trained to assess and treat pets that become ill or experience life-threatening emergencies when their family veterinarians are unavailable.

EMERGENCY CARE

Our emergency teams utilize current technology including blood gas analysis, blood transfusion therapy, capnography, endoscopy, indirect and direct arterial blood pressure monitoring, oxygen therapy, pulse oximetry, digital radiography, EKG, and ultrasonography to evaluate and stabilize patients. Pets have access to further diagnostics such as MRI and CT at our Tinton Falls and Mount Laurel facilities. Emergency surgery can also be performed any time of the day or night at all of our locations. While some emergency patients can be treated and released the same day, many are admitted for further stabilization. Patients with life-threatening illnesses or injuries are admitted to our critical care unit for close monitoring and advanced life-support measures.

CRITICAL CARE

Our critical care units provide 24-hour care for the most critically ill patients. They are equipped with oxygen cages, ventilators, computerized fluid pumps, heart monitors, and other advanced technologies. Critical care specialists monitor, diagnose, and treat pets experiencing a medical crisis as well as those with acute or chronic illness.

Unexpected trauma and serious illness make these decisions all the more difficult. Our board certified critical care doctors will help guide and support you in this process. They work with your primary care veterinarian, emergency doctor, and other specialists by identifying treatment options, managing therapies, anticipating outcomes, and recommending and administering advanced life support measures.

Depending on your pet's condition, you may be asked to provide a code status:

- **GREEN:** Do everything possible, including open chest CPR
- **YELLOW:** Start life saving procedures, call to get permission for anything additional
- **RED:** Do not resuscitate

WYATT GOLDTHWAITE VETERINARY BLOOD BANK

Blood transfusions supply blood cells and clotting factors and are needed in a variety of medical situations such as surgery, trauma, and treating various blood disorders. Our blood bank carries a supply of both canine and feline blood products. We have a number of volunteer donors that help save pet lives by donating to our blood bank. Their donations ensure that blood products are available for patients experiencing a health crisis.



SPECIALISTS

We are proud to have our emergency doctors working side-by-side with our full-time, board certified specialists. This multi-disciplinary approach gives the emergency team access to veterinarians in the fields of acupuncture, anesthesiology & pain management, avian & exotics, cardiology, clinical nutrition, critical

care, dentistry & oral surgery, dermatology & allergy, diagnostic imaging, I-131 therapy, internal medicine, interventional radiology & endoscopy, neurology & neurosurgery, oncology (medical & radiation), ophthalmology, physical rehabilitation, and surgery (orthopedic & soft tissue). If your pet needs to be transferred to the care of a specialist, it can be done without interrupting ongoing medical treatment. The ability to transfer in-house helps promote better patient outcomes with less patient stress.

VISITATION

While in the hospital, your pet is under the care of our highly-qualified team of doctors and technicians 24 hours a day. Though it may be a comfort to see your hospitalized pet, visits sometimes leave pets anxious or unsettled. In order to do what is in the best interest of your pet, we recommend that you speak with your pet's attending veterinarian regarding visitation.

PATIENT UPDATES & COMFORT CHECKS

Your pet's attending veterinarian will contact you daily with a medical report. The update will generally occur in the morning after the doctors conduct medical rounds—a time when they review each patient's progress. In addition, if a significant change occurs in your pet's condition, you will be contacted by a doctor, regardless of the time of day or night, unless you indicate otherwise.

To help ease any feelings of concern that you may have while your pet is hospitalized, you are free to contact us between 9:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. daily to receive a bedtime Comfort Check. These general status updates are provided by our technicians and include an overview of your pet's appetite and thirst, sleep patterns, attitude, and elimination habits (urination, defecation). Detailed medical updates will continue to be provided by your pet's veterinarian only.

PHARMACY

Our emergency hospitals have 24-hour, on-site pharmacies to assist you and your pet following your visit. We dispense enough medication to treat your pet's condition until you can follow up with your primary care veterinarian.

CLINICAL NUTRITION

Hospitalized patients can be at an increased risk of malnutrition either due to their underlying disease or poor food intake while away from home. Our Clinical Nutrition Department works with the team overseeing your pet's hospitalization to ensure that every dog and cat is receiving the best diet plan possible to aid the healing process and complement the high quality medical care being provided.

WORKING WITH YOUR PRIMARY CARE VETERINARIAN

Red Bank Veterinary Hospitals partner with your primary care veterinarian by being available as an emergency hospital 24 hours a day. When possible, your pet is treated on an outpatient basis and then you are directed back to your primary care veterinarian for follow up. Patients requiring immediate hospitalization are transferred to our critical care unit or general wards until they are able to be discharged. We work cooperatively with area veterinarians to ensure they have all of the information needed for long-term follow-up. To maintain the trust that referring veterinarians have in us, we will not accept referred clients into our wellness practice.

We appreciate the confidence you place in our doctors but ask that you return to your family veterinarian for your pet's continued preventive healthcare needs.



IDENTIFYING AN EMERGENCY

The following situations may mean your pet is experiencing a crisis and you should seek veterinary care immediately.



SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Any difficulties breathing; short or shallow breaths; increased effort; gagging; choking
- Weakness; inability to walk; sudden collapse
- First-time seizure, seizures lasting more than 3 minutes, or multiple seizures in one day
- Non-productive retching/vomiting; swollen or distended abdomen
- Allergic reactions including swelling, rashes, or itching
- Excessive or persistent bleeding
- Inability to urinate; straining to urinate
- Diabetic animals refusing food
- Pregnant animals in active labor for more than one hour without delivering, or going more than 3-4 hours between deliveries
- Bumping into things; becoming disoriented
- Signs of pain such as whining, shaking, hiding, or dull behavior
- Vomiting blood/passing blood in stools/urine
- Changes in behavior, appetite, or elimination



TRAUMA

- Bite wounds
- Broken bones
- Burns
- Cuts, lacerations
- Electric shock
- Eye injuries
- Fall from heights
- Heatstroke or frostbite
- Hit by car; car accident
- Penetrating foreign objects



INGESTION OF TOXIC OR HARMFUL SUBSTANCES

- Home and garden products
- Some human foods and sweeteners
- Plants, bulbs, fresh cut flowers
- Human prescriptions, medications
- Foreign bodies (coins, toys)

See pages 13-14 for a more detailed list.

KNOWING VITAL SIGNS

Understanding your pet's normal vital signs is the first step in being able to identify when your pet isn't feeling well. Checking vital signs when your pet is healthy gives you a baseline. If any of your pet's vital signs vary from the ranges listed below, contact your veterinarian to discuss your pet's health.



TEMPERATURE

Don't determine your pet's temperature or overall health by relying on the nose! A cool, wet nose doesn't always mean good health. If the insides of the ears or the skin on the belly is warm to the touch, you may want to check your pet's temperature. We recommend a pediatric plastic thermometer and placing it under the armpit. Using this method, the normal temperature for a dog or cat is between 98.5 - 101 degrees Fahrenheit.



HEART RATE & PULSE

Your pet's heartbeat will consist of two separate sounds and may have a regular or slightly irregular rhythm. Puppies and smaller dogs typically have a faster heart rate than a larger breed dog. A cat's heart rate is even faster. The heart rate can be checked in several ways. Many times the heartbeat can be felt by placing your palm against your pet's chest underneath the left front arm. If your pet is overweight or panting heavily, it may be easier to feel for the femoral pulse. The femoral pulse can be found on the inner thigh of the back leg. A normal heart rate is between 140 and 220 beats per minute for a cat and 60 and 150 for a dog depending on size and breed.





RESPIRATORY RATE

It is normal for dogs to pant in certain situations such as stress, fear, and heat but they should not do it for a prolonged period of time. A normal respiratory rate is 20-30 breaths per minute for cats and 10-35 for dogs. In general, the more relaxed your pet is, the slower the rate of breathing.



MUCOUS MEMBRANE COLOR AND CAPILLARY REFILL TIME

The color of your pet's gums should be a bright healthy pink similar to your gums. This symbolizes good blood circulation. By lifting your pet's upper or lower lip you can easily view your pet's gum color. If your pet's gums are pigmented, you can also check the mucous membrane color by gently pulling down the skin below the eye and looking at the inner eyelid. Mucous membranes that are dark red, pale, or blue indicate a possible emergency situation. Checking the capillary refill time (CRT) can help identify problems with circulation. This can be checked by lifting your pet's lip and pressing on the gums gently with your fingertip for a few seconds and then releasing. Note the time it takes for the color to return to the area pressed. A normal CRT is between 1 and 2 seconds.



PAIN ASSESSMENT

Pain can show itself in a variety of ways and can be a true indicator that a problem may be present when there are no other visible signs of trouble. Because you live with your pet, you will be the first to recognize changes in your pet's behavior. A pet that withdraws from its normal surroundings, has an unusually quiet demeanor, or is not interested in normal activity may be experiencing some level of pain. Pets that want to be left alone, that lay curled or tucked up, and are not interested in food may also be showing signs of discomfort. An extremely painful pet may be vocal (crying, whining), may growl or hiss when touched, and may be unlikely to move. This level of pain may cause animals to react aggressively when touched or prompt them to hide or escape. If you suspect that your pet is in pain, consult with your veterinarian before administering any pain-relief medication.

MANAGING INJURIES AT HOME



Suspected Ingestion of Poison Call one of the following immediately:

- Your pet's primary care veterinarian
- A 24-hour Red Bank Veterinary Hospitals location:
 - **Tinton Falls:** 732-747-3636
 - **Hillsborough:** 908-359-3161
 - **Mount Laurel:** 856-429-4394
- ASPCA Animal Poison Control: 888-426-4435
A \$65 consultation fee may be charged. Please remember to get your case number and give it to your veterinarian.

If recommended by your veterinarian or Poison Control, vomiting may be induced by administering hydrogen peroxide by mouth using a dosing syringe or turkey baster. Do not attempt this without professional advice since some poisons should not be vomited. In those cases, doing so may cause additional damage to the pet's mouth and esophagus as the poison passes through these areas again.

If your pet has swallowed an object such as a sock or a toy, do not induce vomiting without first contacting a veterinarian.

For more information on poisonous substances, visit www.aspc.org



GREASY SUBSTANCES ON PAWS OR HAIR COAT

Apply liberal amounts of a grease-cutting dish detergent such as Dawn™. Avoid getting any soap in your pet's eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Be sure to rinse thoroughly. Repeat as needed.



ALLERGIC REACTIONS

Allergic reactions (such as hives, swollen face, or intense itching) may occur year-round. If you think your pet is experiencing an allergic reaction, call your veterinarian for advice, which may include administering an appropriate dosage of a pet-safe antihistamine. If you think your pet is having difficulty breathing due to the reaction, seek veterinary care immediately. Allergic reactions may occur following ingestion or exposure to things your pet may be sensitive to such as insect bites or stings, vaccinations, medications, and food.



HEAT EXHAUSTION

In hot weather, pets who are outside for extended periods of time or engage in outdoor physical activity can easily overheat and suffer from heatstroke. This is also true for pets left unattended in vehicles during warm months. The most common symptoms are heavy panting, difficulty getting up and walking, and feeling very warm to the touch. If you think your pet is overheated, use a thermometer to take your pet's rectal temperature. If the temperature is 105 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, apply towels soaked with cool water to your pet's abdomen and neck and get your pet to a veterinarian immediately. Be aware that dogs and cats have body temperatures that are higher than our own so don't be alarmed if their temperatures are reading in the 100 to 102.5 degree Fahrenheit range. This is normal for them.



VOMITING/DIARRHEA

If your pet has vomited, withhold food and water and call your veterinarian. If your pet has diarrhea, withhold only the food and call your veterinarian for instructions on feeding your pet a bland diet. If your veterinarian requests to see your pet, consider bringing in a stool sample for testing.



INJURIES

If your pet is in pain or frightened, it is in the best interest of both you and your pet to use a muzzle before administering treatment. A cloth rope or necktie can be used to gently secure the mouth closed.

- For eye irritations or squinting of the eyes – rinse with sterile saline solution and call your veterinarian. Due to the sensitive nature of the eye, all eye injuries should be medically evaluated.
- For superficial abrasions – wash gently with very dilute antibacterial soap or rinse with sterile saline solution and apply topical antibacterial ointment.
- For deep lacerations or puncture wounds – rinse well with sterile saline solution, apply sterile water-based lubricant on the puncture or laceration, cover with gauze and a bandage, and seek veterinary care immediately.
- For fractured/broken bones – minimize movement. If bones are visible through a break in the skin, rinse with sterile saline solution, gently cover with a bandage, and seek veterinary care immediately. If possible, transport your pet on a solid surface such as a board.



PEDICURES

When cutting your pet's nails, you may accidentally cut one too short causing it to bleed. Bleeding can be minimal to excessive. Apply styptic powder or a styptic pencil to the end of the nail with firm pressure and blot with a tissue. You may have to repeat this process several times before bleeding stops. In a pinch, you may also press the nail into a bar of soap, or apply corn starch and water made into a dry paste.



PREPARING A FIRST AID KIT

A pet first aid kit can easily be made using a plastic toolbox. This will help keep supplies clean, dry, and accessible should a medical emergency occur.

- Hydrogen Peroxide
- Dosing syringe or turkey baster
- Antibacterial soap
- Grease-cutting dish detergent (such as Dawn™)
- Rubbing alcohol
- Digital thermometer
- Water-based lubricant (such as KY Jelly™)
- Antihistamine recommended by your veterinarian
- Triple antibiotic ointment (such as Neosporin™)
- Styptic powder or pencil
- Tick remover or tweezer
- Muzzle (or cloth rope or necktie)
- Latex gloves (or similar style)
- Sterile saline solution
- Leash or carrier
- Cotton balls/swabs
- Sterile gauze pads
- Instant cold pack
- Bandage material
 - Cast padding
 - Ace bandage
 - Gauze wrap
- Bandage tape
- Scissors
- Vaccination records
- A recent photograph of your pet



IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

ASPCA Animal Poison Control: 888-426-4435

Primary veterinarian # _____

24-hour emergency veterinarian # _____

Pet microchip ID # _____

Pet microchip company _____

Local police department # _____

DISASTER PLANNING

In the event of an emergency that requires you and your pets to evacuate, here is some advice on how to keep them safe until you can all return home.

BE SURE TO HAVE THE FOLLOWING:

- Name and telephone number of your local veterinary hospital and 24-hour emergency hospital
- A portable pet carrier for each pet in your home
- Identification for each pet. This includes collars and tags, current photos of each pet, and copies of vaccination, town license, microchip and/or tattoo records.
- Leashes and other necessary training and handling accessories
- Water bowls or dispensers
- Food bowls
- Pet foods, including special diets, in water-safe containers
- Extra drinking water
- Daily medications; monthly preventive medications
- Newspapers, towels, blankets, paper towels, baby wipes
- Your pet's favorite toys and treats for comfort
- Extra litter box and litter
- Trash bags for waste clean up
- Pet first aid kit
- Flashlight



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT:

Be prepared when you are traveling and your pet is staying home. Consider documenting your medical wishes and who can make decisions for your pets in the event that you are unreachable and an emergency occurs. In addition to leaving this information with the person caring for your pets, you may want to share this information with your veterinarian also.

POTENTIAL PET HAZARDS

The following items or household products represent common potential toxic or other injury hazards for your pet. We recommend that you take appropriate precautions to prevent exposure or ingestion of these materials. More comprehensive lists and information may be found on the website for the **American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)** at www.aspc.org. If you think that your pet has ingested a poisonous substance, contact your veterinarian, your local veterinary emergency hospital, or the **ASPCA's 24-hour emergency poison hotline at 1-888-426-4435**.

HOME & GARDEN HAZARDS

- Algae and mold
- Automotive fluids (antifreeze, oil, radiator, windshield washer, etc.)
- Baits (slugs, snails, flies)
- Bleach & other cleansers (toilets, tubs, tiles, drains, countertops, floors)
- Citronella candles
- Cocoa mulch
- Compost
- Detergents (laundry, dishwasher, and fabric softener in powders, liquids, and pods)
- Fertilizers
- Flea and other household extermination products
- Insecticides, pesticides, rodenticides (especially those containing bromethalin)
- Lotions and topical ointments
- Mothballs
- Plants and bulbs
- Sunblock
- Swimming pool chemicals



HARMFUL HUMAN FOODS

- Alcoholic beverages
- Avocados
- Caffeinated beverages
- Chocolate
- Fatty foods
- Garlic, onions, chives
- Grapes, raisins
- Macadamia nuts
- Salt
- Xylitol (artificial sweetener in gum, candy, toothpaste, some peanut butter, and other foods)
- Yeast dough

POISONOUS PLANTS

- Aloe
- Amaryllis
- Autumn Crocus
- Azalea
- Baby's Breath
- Castor Bean
- Chrysanthemum
- Clematis
- Cyclamen
- Daffodil
- Dumb Cane
- Gladiolas
- Holly
- Hyacinth
- Hydrangea
- Iris
- Ivy
- Kalanchoe
- Lilies
- Mistletoe
- Narcissus
- Oleander
- Poinsettia
- Pothos
- Rhododendron
- Sago Palm
- Schefflera
- Tulip
- Yew
- Yucca



A large portion of household plants are toxic to pets. To view photographs of a much more extensive list of toxic and harmful plants known to cause systemic effects and/or varying degrees of gastrointestinal upset, visit www.aspc.org.

MEDICATION MENACES

- Human prescriptions
- Over-the-counter human medications (cold and flu, appetite suppressants)
- Pain relievers (aspirin, products containing ibuprofen or acetaminophen)
- Supplements (vitamins, etc.)

OTHER HARMFUL OBJECTS & SITUATIONS

While the following may not be toxic, they may cause electric shock, intestinal blockage, or overall harm.

- Batteries
- Bones
- Buttons
- Cat litter
- Coins (especially pennies)
- Electrical cords, outlets
- Fire (from candles, fireplace)
- Garbage, excessive amounts of food
- Glow jewelry
- Gorilla Glue™
- Marijuana
- Nicotine (cigarettes, patches)
- Paint
- Potpourri
- Ribbon, string, thread
- Tinsel
- Toads, insects, spiders, snakes, and scorpions
- Toys



HILLSBOROUGH | (908) 359-3161

210 Route 206 S., Hillsborough, NJ 08844

MOUNT LAUREL | (856) 429-4394

2051 Briggs Road, Mount Laurel, NJ 08054

TINTON FALLS | (732) 747-3636

197 Hance Avenue, Tinton Falls, NJ 07724



PAYMENT OPTIONS

The Red Bank Veterinary Hospitals accepts the following forms of payment:

- Cash
 - Debit Cards
 - All Major Credit Cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover)
 - CareCredit – A convenient financing plan that allows qualified applicants to divide payments over several months
 - Scratchpay
 - Wells Fargo Health Advantage
 - Apple Pay
 - Personal Checks
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