

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

WHY IS PET FIRST AID CERTIFICATION IMPORTANT

1. Why is it important for pet owners to become certified in pet first aid?

Anything can happen to our furry kids just like the human kids. They are curious and funny; it often gets them into big trouble. The motto "be prepared" works well for boy scouts, so why not for pet parents. Learning to do a Wellness Assessment can help find a lump or a bump early. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. The opportunity is available to find problems before they are devastating. We literally can save a life by artificially breathing for our pets or pumping their hearts when they cannot. You can help eliminate pain and suffering by performing first aid. It is also important because humans and their pets do not speak the same language. Dogs are pack animals so they will try to hide illness in order to keep their place in the pack. By taking a class it will be easier to spot when something is wrong.

2. Does being certified in pet-first aid mean: you don't need to take your dog to the vet when injured?

Absolutely not. Vets are the experts but there is a lot pet parents can do to ensure their dogs live longer happier lives. It is important to work as a team with your vet for the health of your pet.

3. After treatment for an injury, how will you know if you need to also take him to the vet?

It depends on what the injury was. If it was a small cut or scrape watch it for a couple days for signs of infection. If he has been stung by a bee and the swelling is down and he is having no trouble breathing it will okay to keep him at home. Anytime you administer rescue breathing, your pet has had a seizure, you expect a fracture or a back injury, or there is a deep cut or wound, you must follow up with veterinary care.

4. What are suggestions on how to pick a good veterinarian?

Get referrals from people you know, ask other professionals for a referral. Visit the office, is it run effectively. Look into how easy it is to get an appointment; a great vet or practice is useless if you can't get in to see them. Look into the vet's credentials and philosophy to make sure he/she's willing to spend time with both you and your pet to explain what is happening and why. Bottom line; make sure the vet really cares about animals.

5. In case of emergencies, what items are most important and should be on hand at home and why?

- Your veterinarian's phone number
- 3% hydrogen peroxide in case of poisoning
- Sterile gauze bandaging to stop bleeding and prevent infection
- Antihistamine to be administered in case of a bee sting or insect bite.
- A towel or blanket that can be used as a temporary sling or stretcher to transport an animal
- A cold pack to reduce swelling
- A pet first aid book to look up what to do

6. Who can people contact to see if Pet First aid is available in their area?

Contact the All Creatures Great & Small, LLC for our class listing, Pet Tech, Inc or the American Red Cross. If you are local you can be certified through one of my courses; if you are a distance, I can come to your location.

7. What are some of the most common injuries/accidents pet owners should be on the watch for?

Heat stroke is extremely common. Do not leave your pet unattended in a car. It can lead to permanent brain damage and death. Bee stings, tick bites, and digestive upsets are also common, as is poisoning from chemicals or human foods – NO GRAPES, RAISINS, or ONIONS. Many dogs are also injured or killed from being hit by a car. Keep your dog on a leash or securely behind a fence at all times. * 80% of dogs hit by cars are unneutered males. If you are not a breeder, please spay or neuter your dog for its own health and safety.

8. Summer is coming, what injuries/accidents are typical for summer months? Can these be avoided?

Heat stroke happens frequently and can be avoided. Again, never leave your pet unattended in a car. It can lead to permanent brain damage or death. Do not leave your dog in a parked car, it's against the law in Pennsylvania. If your dog must be outdoors, provide a shady spot and plenty of water protected from the sun. When you must walk your dog in the heat choose the cooler mornings or evening hours, keep him on the grass later in the day to prevent paw burns and if possible follow the shade on your walks. Practice water safety by always monitoring pets in pools or lakes. Be wary of chemicals and fertilizers used in yards – wash off the pads if the yards have been treated. Bee stings are also a popular injury in the summer with an occasional snake bite.

9. Are there common injuries that seem to happen during specific times of the year?

Around Halloween, Valentines Day, and Easter be very careful with the consumption of candy and chocolate. Chocolate contains theobromine, a diuretic and stimulant, which is lethal to dogs. Fourth of July is the most dangerous day for dogs and cats to be traumatized by fireworks and escaping. During the winter holiday season, when you are bound to have extra visitors at your home, make sure the guests do not feed your pets and be sure they know to close all doors and gates. During the rainy season, be careful of dogs that are afraid of thunder. The dog may bolt out the door, never to be seen again. The same goes for any holiday where fireworks may ignite around your neighborhood.

10. Many people have Disaster kits for their family in case of earthquake or tornado, what items would you suggest people add to be prepared to care for their pet as well?

People should include the following:

- Pet first aid kit
- Two week supply of food and water (1 gallon of water a day per dog for medium to large dogs, 1 gallon for every two days for small dogs)
- Leashes
- Collars
- Crate
- Two week supply of medication
- Clean-up bags
- Paper towels

It is also wise to find a neighborhood “buddy” that is willing to help take care of your pets if you are unable to get to your home immediately following an emergency.

11. What do you feel are the most crucial skills people will learn at a pet first aid class?

After taking the PetSaver courses that include, Pet First Aid/CPR, dental hygiene and senior care, people begin to understand how to prevent injuries from happening. They learn preventive care that will extend the lives of their friends. **These skills we hope you never need** but should you need them you will be able to perform rescue breathing and CPR, utilize the choking and bleeding protocols, be able to induce vomiting, identify bloat, be able to bandage and splint injuries and much more.

12. How long does the certification last?

After completion of our course, your certification will need to be renewed every 2 years. This is to help keep the skills available just as it is in Human First Aid and CPR. Remember, if you don't practice the skills you learn, they will not be there when you need them. Use it or lose it!