

Ask
Dr. Rene

VETERINARIAN • EDUCATOR • PET ADVOCATE



Pet Emergency *Preparedness Kit*



Everything you need
to prepare before an
emergency happens.



IMPORTANT
INFORMATION



FIRST AID KIT
CHECKLIST



EMERGENCY
GO BAG



WARNING SIGNS
TO WATCH FOR



BE PREPARED.
BE READY.

Prepared by Dr. Rene' Holt, DVM

AskDrRene.com





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Pet Emergency
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PET EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Keep this information up to date and easily accessible in case of an emergency.



PET INFORMATION



Pet Name _____



Species _____



Breed _____



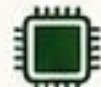
Age _____



Weight _____



Color / Markings _____



Microchip Number _____



MEDICAL INFORMATION



Medical Conditions _____



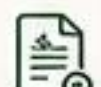
Current Medications _____



Allergies _____



Diet / Feeding Instructions _____



Insurance Company _____



Policy Number _____



VETERINARY & EMERGENCY CONTACTS



PRIMARY VETERINARIAN

Clinic Name _____

Phone _____



NEAREST 24-HOUR EMERGENCY VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Hospital Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

GPS / Maps Notes _____



ASPCA ANIMAL POISON CONTROL CENTER

Phone: (888) 426-4435

Consultation fee may apply.



PET POISON HELPLINE

Phone: (855) 764-7661

Consultation fee may apply.



TRUSTED FRIEND / NEIGHBOR

Name _____

Phone _____



PET SITTER / CAREGIVER

Name _____

Phone _____



Did You Know?

Having this information ready can save valuable time and help your pet get the best care as quickly as possible.



Before an Emergency Happens:

- ✓ Save important numbers in your phone.
- ✓ Know the location of your nearest 24-hour emergency hospital.
- ✓ Keep copies of medical records in your go bag.
- ✓ Review and update this page every 6 months.
- ✓ Update this information when your pet's health or your contacts change.



KEEP THIS PAGE

in your pet's first aid kit, your vehicle, and with your pet sitter or caregiver.

Update every 6 months or whenever your pet's information changes.





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EMERGENCY GO BAG CHECKLIST

If you need to evacuate or get to the veterinarian quickly,
having these essential items ready can make all the difference.



FOOD & WATER



- ☐ 3-day supply of food
- ☐ Bottled water
- ☐ Collapsible food bowl
- ☐ Collapsible water bowl
- ☐ Manual can opener (if needed)



MEDICAL



- ☐ Current medications
- ☐ Extra doses (3–5 days)
- ☐ Prescriptions
- ☐ Medical records
- ☐ Vaccination records
- ☐ Health certificates (if applicable)
- ☐ List of medical conditions
- ☐ Vet contact information



COMFORT & CARE



- ☐ Favorite toy
- ☐ Comfort blanket or towel
- ☐ Treats
- ☐ Pet bed (if portable)
- ☐ Litter box (cats)
- ☐ Litter or puppy pads



IDENTIFICATION



- ☐ Collar with ID tag
- ☐ Harness
- ☐ Leash
- ☐ Recent photo of your pet (on your phone & printed)
- ☐ Microchip information



TRAVEL & SAFETY



- ☐ Pet carrier or crate
- ☐ Seat belt or crate strap
- ☐ Muzzle (dogs)
- ☐ Waste bags
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Flashlight
- ☐ Emergency contact list



MISCELLANEOUS



- ☐ Copies of ID & pet ownership
- ☐ Cash (ATMs may not work)
- ☐ Cell phone charger / power bank
- ☐ Basic first aid kit
- ☐ Duct tape
- ☐ Pen & notepad



Did You Know?

In a disaster, public shelters may not accept pets. Having a plan and a go bag helps keep your pet safe and with you.



IMPORTANT:

Check and restock your go bag every 6 months. Replace expired medications and food.



Scan to visit the
Ask Dr. Rene'
Emergency
Learning Center
for more info.



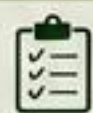
KEEP YOUR GO BAG IN AN EASY-TO-GRAB LOCATION.
Only takes a few minutes today. Could make all the difference tomorrow.





EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST

Take a few simple steps today to be ready for the unexpected.
Prepared pets. Calm owners. Better outcomes.



1. PLAN AHEAD



- ☐ Identify your regular veterinarian and 24-hour emergency hospital.
- ☐ Save important phone numbers in your phone and write them down.
- ☐ Know the fastest route to your emergency hospital.
- ☐ Identify a trusted friend, neighbor, or pet sitter who can help if needed.
- ☐ Review this plan with all family members.



TIP: In an emergency, every minute matters. A little preparation now can save precious time.



2. BE INFORMED



- ☐ Know basic first aid for pets.
- ☐ Learn the signs of common emergencies (see AskDrRene.com/emergency).
- ☐ Know what toxins are in your home and how to prevent exposure.
- ☐ Keep up-to-date on your pet's wellness visits, vaccinations, and preventative care.
- ☐ Understand your pet's medical conditions and daily medications.



TIP: Knowledge gives you confidence and helps you act quickly.



3. BUILD YOUR KIT



- ☐ Use the First Aid Kit Checklist on the next page to stock your pet first aid kit.
- ☐ Include items for your home, car, and travel.
- ☐ Check expiration dates regularly.
- ☐ Store your kit in an easy-to-access location.
- ☐ Replenish items as needed.



TIP: A well-stocked kit helps you provide care before you reach the veterinarian.



4. PRACTICE & PREPARE



- ☐ Practice how to safely load your pet in the car.
- ☐ Have a carrier or crate ready and accessible.
- ☐ Keep a recent photo of your pet (printed and on your phone).
- ☐ Create an evacuation plan for your home.
- ☐ If you have multiple pets, plan how you will transport and care for each of them.



TIP: Practicing your plan now can reduce stress and confusion during an emergency.



Don't Forget!



Update medications and medical records



Keep extra food and water on hand



Stay aware of weather alerts and natural disasters



Keep ID tags on your pet's collar at all times



Most importantly — stay calm and take a deep breath. You've got this!



WHERE TO KEEP COPIES



In your home with your pet first aid kit



In your vehicle (glove box or console)



With your pet sitter or caregiver



Digitally (phone, email, or cloud)

Review and update your plan and kit every 6 months or whenever there is a change in your pet's health, medications, or your contact information.



Need More
Help?



Scan the QR code for emergency articles, toxin guides, videos, and printable resources. New content is added regularly!



AskDrRene.com/emergency

Because being prepared
means peace of mind.





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PET FIRST AID KIT CHECKLIST

A well-stocked first aid kit helps you provide care and buy time until you reach the veterinarian.



ESSENTIAL ITEMS TO INCLUDE



- ☐ Adhesive bandage rolls – For securing bandages and dressings
- ☐ Gauze pads (various sizes) – For wounds and bleeding
- ☐ Non-stick pads – To cover wounds without sticking
- ☐ Self-adhesive wrap – To hold bandages in place
- ☐ Medical tape – Secure dressings and supplies
- ☐ Antiseptic wipes or solution – For cleaning wounds (chlorhexidine is pet-safe)
- ☐ Saline solution – To flush wounds and eyes
- ☐ Digital thermometer – For checking body temperature
- ☐ Styptic powder or pencil – To help stop nail bleeding
- ☐ Tweezers (blunt tip) – To remove splinters, ticks, or debris
- ☐ Scissors (blunt tip) – For cutting bandages or fur
- ☐ Muzzle – For safe handling if your pet is in pain
- ☐ Disposable gloves – To protect you and your pet
- ☐ Instant cold pack – For sprains, swelling, or heatstroke
- ☐ Eye wash – For flushing eyes
- ☐ Cotton swabs – For applying ointments or cleaning
- ☐ Pet-safe antibiotic ointment – For minor cuts and scrapes (avoid products with pain relievers or steroids)
- ☐ Oral syringe (without needle) – For giving fluids or medications
- ☐ Emergency blanket – For shock, warmth, or transport
- ☐ Tick remover – Safe tick removal tool
- ☐ Notes & pen – To record important information
- ☐ First aid guide – Keep this kit or quick reference nearby



Remember:

Never give human medications unless specifically directed by your veterinarian or poison control.



ADDITIONAL ITEMS (IF SPACE ALLOWS)



- ☐ Benadryl (diphenhydramine) – For allergic reactions* (check dose with your veterinarian)
- ☐ Activated charcoal – For certain poison exposures* (use only if advised by poison control)
- ☐ Fluids (oral rehydration solution) – For dehydration
- ☐ Splinting material – Tongue depressors, card stock, or rolled magazines
- ☐ Elastic bandage (Vet Wrap) – For sprains and swelling
- ☐ Flashlight or headlamp – For low light emergencies
- ☐ Copies of medical records – Keep in a waterproof bag

* These items should only be used under the guidance of your veterinarian or a pet poison control professional.



KIT TIPS



-  Store your kit in a waterproof, easy-to-carry container.
-  Keep one at home and one in your vehicle.
-  Check and restock every 6 months.
-  Make sure everyone in your household knows where the kit is kept.
-  Replace expired items and worn supplies.



NORMAL VITAL RANGES (AT REST)



PET	HEART RATE (beats per minute)	RESPIRATORY RATE (breaths per minute)	NORMAL BODY TEMP
Dog (small)	70 – 120	10 – 30	99.5° – 102.5°F
Dog (large)	60 – 100	10 – 30	99.0° – 102.0°F
Cat	140 – 220	20 – 30	100.0° – 102.5°F

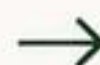
* Vital signs can vary with age, breed, activity, and stress.



Need
More
Help?

Scan the QR code for:

- ✓ Emergency articles
- ✓ Step-by-step guides
- ✓ Videos
- ✓ Printable resources
- ✓ New content added regularly



AskDrRene.com/emergency

Be prepared. Stay informed.
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Prepared by Dr. Rene' Holt, DVM

AskDrRene.com





DOES MY PET NEED AN EMERGENCY VET?

Use this guide to help you decide what to do.
When in doubt, it's always safer to call your veterinarian.



GO TO THE EMERGENCY VET IMMEDIATELY

Time matters.
Do not wait.



Difficulty breathing
or shortness of breath



Collapse or
unconsciousness



Hit by a car or fall
from a height



Severe bleeding that
won't stop



Unable to stand
or walk



Suspected bloat
(swollen abdomen,
restless, drooling, retching)



Seizure lasting
more than 5 minutes



Eye injury or
sudden vision loss



Heatstroke
(excessive panting,
weakness, bright red gums)



Toxin/poison exposure
(see examples to the right)

EXAMPLES OF TOXINS

- Chocolate
- Xylitol (sugar-free gum, candy, peanut butter)
- Grapes / Raisins
- Onions / Garlic
- Ibuprofen / Aspirin
- Rodenticides (rat/mouse poison)
- Marijuana
- Certain plants
- Household cleaners or chemicals



CALL YOUR VETERINARIAN TODAY

Get advice and
monitor closely.



Vomiting or diarrhea
(especially if repeated)



Coughing



Limping or lameness



Itching, hives, or
mild swelling



Loss of appetite
for more than 24 hours



Mild wounds or
skin issues



Ear infection or
head shaking



Changes in behavior
(lethargy, hiding, anxiety)



TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS.

If something doesn't
seem right or your
pet is acting "not
normal," give your
veterinarian a call.
You know your
pet best.



CONTINUE MONITORING

Keep an eye on
your pet.



Mild stomach upset
(one episode,
otherwise normal)



No other signs
of concern



Small, superficial scrape
or minor cut



Minor issues that
are improving



Normal behavior,
eating, drinking,
and activity



Keep an eye on
your pet and
recheck as needed



When in doubt,
call your veterinarian.
It's always better
to ask.



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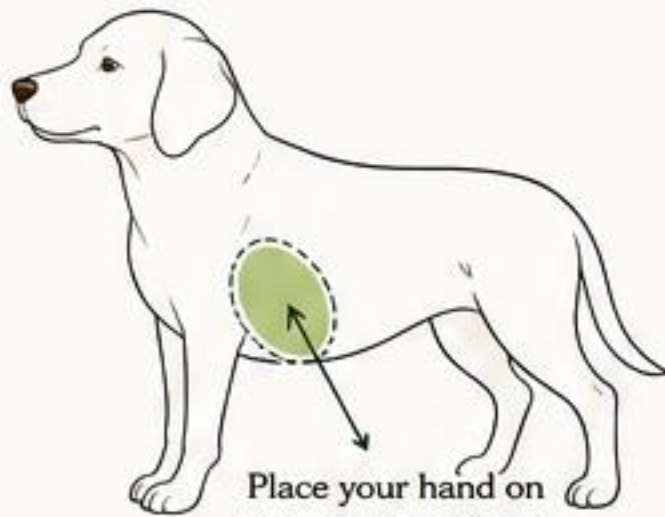
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HOW TO CHECK YOUR PET'S Vital Signs

Knowing normal helps you spot when something is wrong.
If any values are outside the normal range or you are unsure,
contact your veterinarian.

1 HEART RATE (beats per minute)



Place your hand on
the left side of your
pet's chest, just
behind the elbow.

- 1 Place your hand on the left side of your pet's chest, just behind the elbow.
- 2 Feel for the beat.
- 3 Count the beats for 15 seconds.
- 4 Multiply by 4 to get beats per minute.

NORMAL RANGE (at rest)



DOG (small): 70 – 120 bpm
DOG (large): 60 – 100 bpm

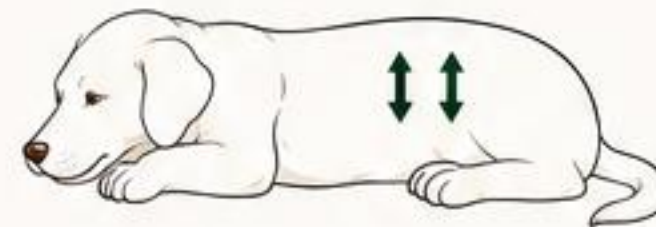


CAT: 140 – 220 bpm



When to worry: Too fast, too slow, or irregular rhythm.

2 RESPIRATORY RATE (breaths per minute)



- 1 Watch your pet's chest or abdomen rise and fall.
- 2 Count one rise and one fall as one breath.
- 3 Count the breaths for 15 seconds.
- 4 Multiply by 4 to get breaths per minute.

NORMAL RANGE (at rest)



DOG: 10 – 30
breaths per minute



CAT: 20 – 30
breaths per minute



When to worry: Rapid breathing, difficulty breathing, or prolonged open-mouth breathing.

3 GUM COLOR

Lift your pet's upper lip and
check the color of the gums.

HEALTHY PINK



Good circulation
and oxygen
levels.

PALE / WHITE



Possible poor
circulation or
blood loss.

BLUE / PURPLE



Not enough
oxygen getting
to the body.

BRIGHT RED



Possible
heatstroke or
severe
inflammation.

VERY DARK
RED / GRAY /
WHITE



Emergency!
Seek veterinary
care immediately.



TIP: Gums should be moist and smooth, not sticky or dry.

4 CAPILLARY REFILL TIME (CRT) (checks circulation)

1. PRESS

Press your fingertip
firmly on your pet's
gum until it turns
white.



2. RELEASE

Lift your finger.



3. COUNT

Count how long it
takes for the color
to return to pink.



NORMAL

Less than 2 seconds

CONCERNING

More than 2 seconds



When to worry: Sluggish or no color return.

5 TEMPERATURE (°F)



Use a lubricated
digital rectal
thermometer.
Insert gently about
1–2 inches into
the rectum.

NORMAL RANGE



DOG:
99.5° – 102.5 °F



CAT:
100.0° – 102.5 °F



TIP: Fever or low body temperature can be a sign of infection, inflammation, or shock.

6 HYDRATION CHECK (checks fluid status)

1. LIFT

Gently lift the skin
on the back between
the shoulder blades.



2. RELEASE

Release the skin.



3. OBSERVE



RETURNS
IMMEDIATELY
Well hydrated



RETURNS
SLOWLY
Dehydrated



TIP: Also check gum moisture and urine production.

Need More
Help?



Scan the QR code for:

- ✓ Emergency articles
- ✓ Step-by-step guides
- ✓ Videos
- ✓ Printable resources
- ✓ New content added regularly



AskDrRene.com/emergency

Be prepared. Stay informed.
Give your pet the best chance
in an emergency. ♥





EMERGENCY WARNING SIGNS

Know the signs. Act fast. It could save their life.

These signs can indicate a serious or life-threatening condition.
If you see any of these, contact your veterinarian or an emergency clinic right away.



RESPIRATORY

- Difficulty breathing or rapid breathing
- Gasping for air
- Open-mouth breathing (not panting)
- Blue or pale gums
- Collapse



CARDIAC

- Collapse or fainting
- Weakness
- Rapid heartbeat at rest
- Pale or blue gums
- Exercise intolerance



GASTROINTESTINAL

- Repeated vomiting
- Vomiting blood or material that looks like coffee grounds
- Severe or bloody diarrhea
- Swollen or painful abdomen
- Cannot keep water down



NEUROLOGIC

- Seizures
- Disorientation or circling
- Head tilt
- Staggering or loss of balance
- Sudden blindness
- Unresponsiveness



TRAUMA / INJURY

- Hit by a car
- Falls from a height
- Deep wounds or bleeding that won't stop
- Broken bones
- Difficulty standing or moving



POISONING / TOXINS

- Ingestion of toxins (foods, plants, medications, chemicals)
- Drooling, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Tremors or seizures
- Weakness or collapse



HEAT-RELATED

- Heavy panting
- Bright red gums
- Drooling
- Vomiting
- Weakness or collapse
- Body temperature over 103°F



URINARY

- Straining to urinate
- Unable to urinate
- Crying or acting in pain
- Blood in urine
- Frequent trips with little to no urine



OTHER CONCERNS TO WATCH FOR



EYES

Squinting, redness, discharge, swelling, or sudden vision loss.



EARS

Severe scratching, head shaking, discharge, or foul odor.



SKIN

Sudden swelling, hives, difficulty breathing, or severe wounds.



INAPPETENCE

Not eating for 24 hours (or less in young animals) with other signs.



EXTREME CHANGES

Sudden weight loss, extreme lethargy, or behavior changes.



JUST NOT RIGHT

If something seems off and you're worried—trust your gut.

WHAT TO DO



- 1 Stay calm and act quickly.
- 2 Call your veterinarian or the nearest 24-hour emergency clinic.
- 3 Describe the signs clearly and follow their instructions.
- 4 If advised, bring a stool, vomit sample, or vomit photo.
- 5 Do not give human medications unless specifically directed by your veterinarian.

BE PREPARED ♥

Keep your emergency kit stocked and important phone numbers saved in your phone and posted in your home.

- 🐾 Your Veterinarian _____
- 📞 Emergency Clinic _____
- 📍 Address _____

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- ✓ Information added regularly



[AskDrRene.com/emergency](https://askdrreneweb.com/emergency)

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EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

When every second counts, having a plan can help you stay calm and get your pet the care they need.

START



Something is wrong with my pet.

1



Is your pet breathing normally?

NO



Go to the nearest emergency veterinarian immediately.

YES

Continue

2



Is your pet experiencing ANY of these?

- Collapse
- Severe bleeding
- Unable to urinate
- Repeated seizures
- Heatstroke
- Hit by a vehicle
- Suspected bloat

YES



Seek emergency veterinary care immediately.

NO

Continue

3



Did your pet eat a toxin or unknown substance?

Examples:

- Chocolate
- Xylitol
- Human medications
- Toxic plants
- Household chemicals

YES



Call your veterinarian or Pet Poison Helpline immediately.

(See resources on next page.)

NO

Continue

4



Is your pet eating, drinking, walking, and acting normally?

NO



Contact your veterinarian today.

YES



Continue monitoring your pet closely. Recheck often.



BEFORE YOU LEAVE

- ☐ Call the veterinary hospital before leaving if possible.
- ☐ Bring medications or supplements.
- ☐ Bring a list of your pet's medical conditions.
- ☐ Bring a stool or vomit sample if instructed.
- ☐ Secure your pet with a leash or carrier.
- ☐ Bring another person if possible.
- ☐ Stay calm—your pet often responds to your emotions.



REMEMBER

Staying calm allows you to think more clearly and helps your veterinary team provide the best care possible.



When in doubt, it is always safer to have your pet evaluated.



Need More Help?



Scan the QR code for:

- ✓ Emergency articles
- ✓ Step-by-step guides
- ✓ Videos
- ✓ Printable resources
- ✓ This kit and more added regularly



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EMERGENCY RESOURCES & NOTES

Keep this page in an easy-to-find place so it's ready when you need it.



IMPORTANT CONTACTS



Primary Veterinarian

Clinic Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____



24-Hour Emergency Hospital

Clinic Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____



Backup Veterinary Clinic

Clinic Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____



Pet Sitter / Emergency Caregiver

Name _____

Phone _____

Notes _____



POISON RESOURCES



ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center

(888) 426-4435



Pet Poison Helpline

(855) 764-7661

Consultation fees may apply.



EMERGENCY REMINDERS

- ☐ Bring your pet safely restrained (carrier or leash)
- ☐ Bring medications
- ☐ Bring your Emergency Information sheet
- ☐ Bring any vomit, stool, or toxin packaging if instructed
- ☐ Call ahead if possible
- ☐ Stay calm and drive safely



NOTES

Use this space for medication instructions, emergency directions, poison control case numbers, follow-up recommendations, or anything your veterinarian tells you during a crisis.





Preparation doesn't prevent every emergency,
but it can make a frightening situation a little less overwhelming.
Taking a few minutes to prepare today may help you act
more confidently when your pet needs you most.

Dr. Rene' Holt



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