



2 Grand Drive , Raynes Park , London , SW20 0JT
Tel 020 8542 4524 · Fax 020 8588 5409 · info@parkvets.co.uk · www.parkvets.co.uk

EMERGENCIES

Don't panic, breathe and take time to assess the situation. If you are at all unsure, phone us. If we are closed, phone our normal number and the answer machine message has the number for our emergency service. Please do not come straight down to the surgery - phone us first to let us know what has happened and how long you will be, so that we can prepare for your arrival, getting equipment ready and making sure staff are available. This saves valuable time.

Wound Management

- Blood loss: Is the wound still bleeding and if not how much blood has been lost? An animal can lose roughly 1% of body mass in blood with no ill effects e.g. A 5kg cat can lose 50mls of blood.
- If the wound is still bleeding apply direct pressure to the area using a clean dressing /cloth with your hand for 5 mins. Do not use a tourniquet.
- Once the bleeding has stopped, clean it, washing it well with large quantities of (ideally) boiled water allowed to go cold. Failing that, use the shower.
- If the bleeding has stopped, the animal is bright in itself, and does not seem to be in a lot of pain, it is not an emergency. You can book an appointment to be seen later in the day or the following day.

Vomiting

- Is the animal well in itself?
- How frequent is the vomiting?
- Is the animal eating and drinking? If so can the animal keep the food or water down or is it triggering the vomiting?

It IS an emergency when...

- Very frequent vomiting i.e. hourly.
- Your pet is very subdued and depressed in itself i.e. not reacting to the environment.
- Not drinking or unable to hold water down.

Bladder Blockage

- This is mainly a concern in cats but can occasionally be a problem with dogs. It mainly affects males as they have narrower plumbing.
- The animal usually shows signs of cystitis to start with, such as frequent urination, producing small amounts of urine and sometimes starts having accidents around the house.
- A small number of animals will develop a blockage to the urethra caused by urethral spasm or plug/stone.
- These animals will be very uncomfortable. They tend to lick and groom around their genitals almost constantly. They are restless with very frequent visits to the litter tray or around the house, squatting and straining. They produce only a couple of drops or no urine at all at each visit.
- Once the blockage has occurred the bladder will fill and cause back pressure on the kidneys after 24 hrs. The kidneys will fail after 36-48hrs leading to the animal dying.
- If your animal shows any signs of blockage it is a medical emergency and it will **not** wait till the morning.

Inappetance and Not drinking

- The drive to drink is much stronger than to eat. If an animal is eating (even if only a small amount) it will be drinking.
- In most cases if the animal is not eating anything, is definitely drinking and is bright with no other obvious problems, then it is OK to monitor a dog for up to 3 days and a cat up to 2 days.
- The animal should also be seen sooner if it is subdued and depressed or exhibiting other signs like vomiting or diarrhoea.
- If the animal is **not drinking at all** it needs to be seen within 24 hrs. As dehydration happens after this time the animal will die after 3-5 days

Epilepsy

- An epileptic fit or seizure is one of the most upsetting things an owner can witness but they are not all emergencies.
- Just before the fit, the animal is often lying down and resting but not asleep. The animal will sometimes seek the owner out and be behaving slightly abnormally. The animal falls over onto its side, will often salivate, there will be muscle tremors, paddling with the legs and jaw movements. The animal is also unaware of its surroundings seeming to stare straight ahead. This usually only lasts a few seconds to a few minutes. The animal regains consciousness and will appear very tired and possibly wobbly. This last phase can last 3-12hrs.
- If your animal is having a seizure, then clear objects away from him or her. DO NOT try and hold or restrain the animal in any way, as this may result in you getting injured.
- Seizures are only an emergency if the animal has one and continues to have one that lasts longer than 5mins, or has cluster seizures e.g. has one, seems to start recovering, then goes straight back into another. If the animal has one mild one and seems to recover then you can wait till the following day to be seen.

Breathing Problems

- Generally coughing by itself is not an emergency,
- Laboured breathing, rapid shallow breathing, open mouth breathing or (in cats) panting when not stressed all can indicate potentially life-threatening problems.
- Animals will often adopt a crouched position with their head and neck extended to try and increase airflow.
- Though these signs can indicate a range of conditions e.g. heart failure, road traffic accident, asthma attack, they all indicate severe compromise to the respiratory tract and the animal should be seen immediately.