

Dog First Aid Kit Essentials

Jan Reisen | August 09, 2016 | AKC Website

Emergencies can strike at any time—whether you're at home, running errands around town, or traveling far and wide. When they do occur, you need to be prepared with a dog first aid kit, along with your human supplies. Keep your kit well stocked and contained in a bag or box. That way you'll be ready for anything that happens—at home or when you travel.

You can buy a complete kit, like the Pet First Aid Kit, and add important personalized items, or you can start with a basic human first-aid kit and add dog-specific supplies. Many items are common everyday supplies you already have in the house. This list will help you assemble everything you need for a canine medical emergency or health issue.

What to Include in Your Dog First Aid Kit

Paperwork: In an emergency situation, you'll want pertinent information in one place. Keep a hard copy of medical records, vaccination records, any prescriptions, and emergency phone numbers.

A canine first aid manual, like the one published by the Red Cross: Do you really know, off the top of your head, how to give CPR to dogs? No matter how much you think you know, this is a first aid kit essential.

Gauze, non-stick bandages, and adhesive tape: Control bleeding and protect wounds. You can even use gauze as a makeshift muzzle if you need it. Make sure to buy adhesive bandages made especially for pets and don't use those meant for humans.

Extra Food: Be sure to pack even more of your dog's food than you'll think you'll need. We recommend Purina® Pro Plan®, which offers nutrition in multiple forms depending on your dog's taste and dietary needs. Whether you have a puppy, an adult dog, or you're looking to support your senior canine, Purina® Pro Plan® will have you covered.

Hydrogen peroxide: Use this to induce vomiting if your dog eats something toxic. Be familiar with the proper dosage and way to administer before you need it and check with either poison control or a veterinarian before use.

Antibiotic spray or ointment: This will help reduce or prevent infection from scratches and cuts. Have some antibiotic wipes, as well, for cleaning wounds, and styptic in liquid or powder form to control bleeding.

Milk of Magnesia, or activated charcoal: This can be used to absorb poison, but always check with a vet first.

Treats: During this stressful time, it's important that your dog is given more than just your emotional support, and sometimes that comes in the form of treats. Purina® Pro Plan®'s treats

are excellent choices, as they're not only delicious, but they use real chicken and turkey as the first ingredients and don't include any artificial coloring or flavoring.

An eyedropper or syringe: You can use this to flush wounds or to give oral medications.

Your dog's medications: If your dog regularly takes any medication, be sure to have a supply on hand as backup.

An extra leash and collar: Things can get lost when you travel, and in an accident or other emergency situation, his collar may come off or the leash may snap.

A soft muzzle: No matter how docile he normally is, your dog may be frantic if hurt or wounded, and a muzzle, preferably an adjustable muzzle, will keep him from biting. In a pinch, you can use a roll of gauze or strip of cloth. Even a stocking would work. Do not use a muzzle if he's vomiting, having trouble breathing, is coughing or choking.

Other Basic Common Sense Equipment to Pack in Your Dog's First Aid Kit:

- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Digital Thermometer
- Magnifying glass
- Disposable gloves
- Cotton balls or swabs
- A towel or blanket
- Bottled water
- A flashlight
- His favorite treats, which will make it easier to distract him or reward him for his brave behavior.

You may think of other items that might come in handy, and by all means, add them to the kit. If you're lucky, you may never need any of these supplies at all, but, as the Boy Scouts say, "be prepared."