



Emergency care for cat owners



This leaflet has been produced by
Vets Now Ltd who provide a dedicated
Out Of Hours emergency clinic in your area.

 **Vets now**
Improving the lives
of vets & pets

Emergency Situations

In an emergency situation it is important to try to remain calm. Always phone your vet before attending in order to check which surgery to go to. When calling the vet please have a pen and paper ready to write down any instructions or directions. Outwith daytime practice hours the Vets Now emergency clinic is available to provide you immediate first class care. Maps with directions to your local Vets Now clinic are available from your vet or on our website at www.vets-now.com

What to do in an emergency...

These are some of the most common emergencies that occur in cats and some general advice on how to deal with them. Remember this leaflet is not designed to replace your vet! Always seek veterinary advice if you are concerned about your cat.

Blockage of the Urinary Tract:

If your cat starts straining frequently in his litter tray (or anywhere else!) then he may be suffering from cystitis (inflammation and pain in the bladder) or bladder stones. These small stones can block the flow of urine and prevent the bladder from emptying. This becomes very painful and is life-threatening. Please contact your vet immediately if these signs occur.

Breathing Difficulties:

Please contact your vet as soon as possible if you notice:

- Any changes in breathing patterns or persistent breathlessness.
- Open-mouthed panting lasting more than a few minutes.

Road Traffic Accident and other Traumatic Injuries:

If you think your cat has been hit by a car take him to the surgery as soon as possible:

- Internal bleeding can occur without showing any outward signs initially and therefore it is important that a vet sees him.
- If you suspect your cat has a broken leg or head injury you should carefully slide him onto a towel or blanket. Place him in a box for transportation to the surgery. Since cats are expert escapologists please remember to use a secure box!

Aortic Thrombo-Embolism:

This is a very serious condition in which a blood clot blocks a major blood vessel supplying the back legs. Signs include:

- Sudden loss of the ability to use one or both back legs.
- Crying out and appearing to be in pain.

This condition can be easily confused with a road accident. Please contact your vet immediately and prepare to take your cat to the vets.

Infected Wounds and Bite Abscesses:

These often appear as a swelling around the face or head. They may burst and dirty brown or bloody fluid will drain out. You should assist drainage of these wounds by regularly cleaning the area with warm slightly salted water and cotton wool. Cats with infected wounds will frequently require antibiotics and you should seek advice.

High Temperature:

Cats sometimes develop a very high temperature, often in response to an infection.

- Affected cats may be dull or sleepy, and reluctant to eat or drink.
- Cats can have a fever without being hot to the touch.

Poisons:

- Paracetamol and ibuprofen are poisonous to cats and should never be given. Aspirin should only be administered on instruction by a vet.
- Some plants and flowers, and all parts of the lily plant, are highly poisonous to cats. If you think your cat may have ingested these please contact your vet immediately.