

## IS THIS AN EMERGENCY?

### URINARY TRACT BLOCKAGE

- Yes, your pet is experiencing a severe emergency situation. Both male and female cats and dogs may have a urinary tract blockage. Blockages are most commonly seen in male cats. When the urinary bladder is blocked it makes it impossible for him/her to urinate. The urinary bladder can rupture if this is left unnoticed. If the bladder ruptures, it will be fatal within hours if not dealt with immediately.
  
- How do I know if my pet has a urinary tract blockage? Common clinical signs may include:
  - Straining to urinate
  - Frequent visits to the litter box
  - Frequently passing only small amounts of urine
  - Blood in the urine
  - Vocalization with urinating or while in the litter box
  - Distended, painful abdomen
  - Depression
  - Dehydration
  - Vomiting
  - Low body temperature
  
- I believe my pet is blocked, now what? Call your veterinarian immediately and inform them that you believe your pet has a urinary tract blockage. If your veterinarian is not available, contact the closest veterinary emergency clinic immediately. An emergency procedure is necessary to unblock him/her. Your pet will have to be hospitalized for several days. This is absolutely necessary to try to save their life.

### VOMITING

- Yes, this can be an emergency situation. Contact your veterinarian. If your veterinarian is unavailable, and you are concerned, contact a local veterinary emergency clinic.
  
- If your pet is vomiting, they may also be experiencing some of the following clinical signs:
  - Restlessness
  - Salivation
  - Repeated swallowing
  - Panting
  - Painful abdomen
  
- Important things to note which may help your veterinarian determine the cause of vomiting:
  - What is the colour (white, brown, green, yellow, red)?
  - Is there blood present?

- What is the consistency (foam, fluid, undigested food, foreign objects)?
- When does vomiting occur (sudden onset, after drinking, after eating, after medication)?
- There are a number of possibilities as to why your pet may be vomiting. It is important to contact your veterinarian as soon as possible when vomiting is noted. Diagnostic tests are often needed to determine how critical the situation and to confirm a diagnosis. Vomiting should never be ignored, it may be the first sign of something life threatening for your pet.

## **DIARRHEA**

- Yes, this may be an emergency situation. Contact your veterinarian. If your veterinarian is unavailable, and you are concerned, contact a local veterinary emergency clinic.
- If your pet is having diarrhea, they may also be experiencing some of the following clinical signs:
  - Restlessness
  - Straining while passing feces
  - Frequent passage of feces
  - Painful abdomen
- Important things to note which may help your veterinarian determine the cause of the diarrhea:
  - What is the colour (brown, green, yellow, red, black)?
  - Is there blood present (red, black)?
  - What is the consistency (watery, soft, undigested food, foreign objects)?
  - Is there an unusual odour?
  - How much diarrhea is produced?
  - How frequently does the diarrhea occur?
- There are a number of possibilities as to why your pet may be experiencing diarrhea. It is important to contact your veterinarian as soon as possible when diarrhea is noted. Diagnostic tests are often needed to determine the extent of the disease and confirm a diagnosis. Diarrhea should never be ignored, it may be the first sign of something life threatening for your pet.

## **TOXINS**

- Please note our list of common household foods that should never be given to your cat or dog.
- Please note our list of toxic plants and other toxic items that your pet should never ingest.
- If you are unsure if the object your pet has ingested is toxic, please do not hesitate to contact your veterinarian. The longer you wait to address a toxicity problem, the more likely to have irreversible and possibly fatal effects.

(This information is from "Small Animal Emergency and Critical Care for Veterinary Technicians" 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. By: Andrea M. Battaglia.)

### **TOXIC PLANTS AND OTHER TOXIC ITEMS YOUR CAT OR DOG SHOULD NEVER INGEST**

If your cat or dog has ingested a plant, please visit the following link for more information regarding which plants are toxic and which plants are nontoxic. <http://www.aspca.org/pet-care/poison-control/plants/>

If your cat or dog has ingested a toxic plant, please contact your veterinarian immediately, this is an emergency situation.