



It's an emergency!



Student Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care Society





What you will learn

- Worrying signs you'll likely see if your pet is experiencing an emergency
- Common veterinary emergencies that should be evaluated by a veterinarian immediately
- Helpful information about the ins & outs of a veterinary emergency room
- How COVID has affected the veterinary industry



Let's get started!

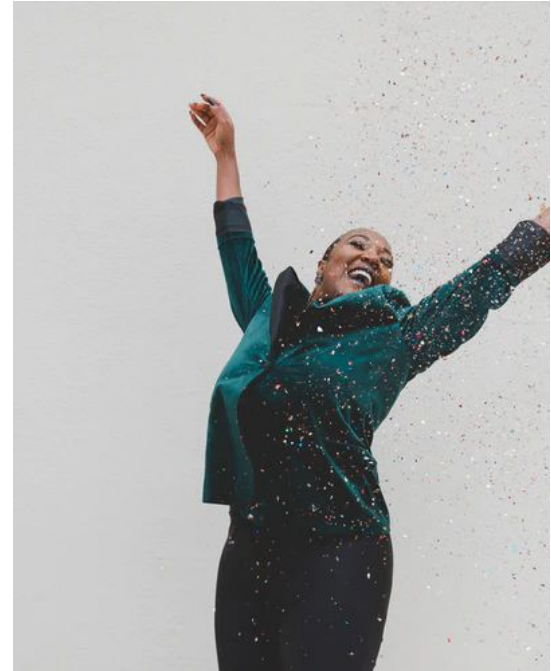


General Signs Warranting Immediate Care

- Dark/blue-ish or pale gums
- Difficulty breathing
- More than 1 seizure in 24 hours
- Acting unresponsive
- Episodes of collapse
- Trauma - hit by car, etc.
- Excessive bleeding
- Toxin ingestion



**Let's get some
practice with
determining if
something is an
emergency!**



Is this an emergency?

You come home after work to find Tiger straining to urinate in his litterbox. Upon further investigation, you see that there are no urine clumps and you just cleaned the litter box last night. It seems that Tiger has not urinated in almost 24 hours. At this point in the night, your regular vet is closed so you can't call them to get advice. Does Tiger need immediate veterinary attention?





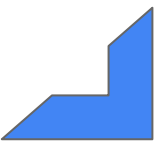
Is this an emergency?

YES, this is an emergency!

Tiger's inability to urinate is an emergency and he needs to be evaluated by a veterinarian right away.

We would be most concerned about a urinary obstruction, which is a life threatening condition if left untreated.

Seek veterinary attention immediately to confirm if there is urinary obstruction and to discuss treatment options.



Is this an emergency?

You take your dog George on a walk and he helps himself to some grass on the side of the road. You continue your walk and George is still doing well. When you get home, you relax on the couch. When you get up later, you find a pile of green vomit on the kitchen floor. There is some grass in the vomit, but George otherwise seems fine and alert.





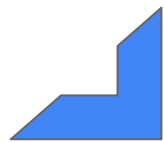
Is this an emergency?

This is likely not an emergency.

We recommend you continue to monitor your dog and reassess if they continue vomiting, or if they have a change in mentation.

Signs that you should go to an ER for vomiting:

- Continuous vomiting/voluminous vomiting
- Red-tinged vomit
- Lethargy
- Evidence of foreign body or toxin ingestion



Is this an emergency?

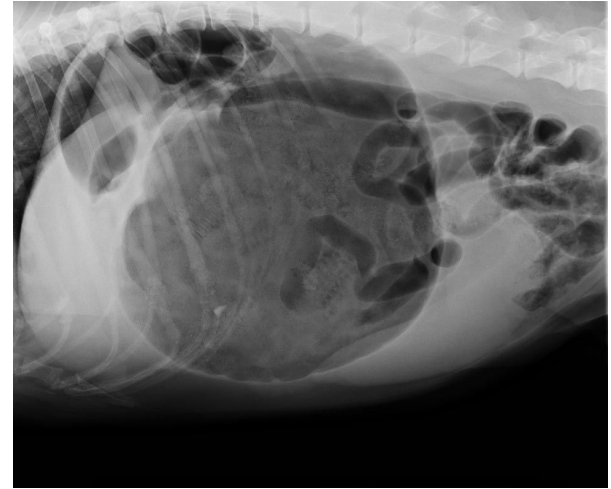
You get home from work and you find your German Shepherd is acting like he is about to vomit but isn't able to bring anything up, almost like he is dry heaving. You also notice that his belly seems rounder and bigger than normal. Do you think this is an emergency?



Is this an emergency?

YES, this is an emergency!

What we are most concerned about would be GDV, or more commonly known as bloat or stomach torsion. This is common in your larger breeds with deep chests like German Shepherds, Great Danes, or Retrievers. It can be seen in other breeds as well. You need to immediately go to a veterinarian, where they will likely take radiographs. Radiographs are taken to confirm the diagnosis and to optimize treatment options. To the right is an example radiograph of what a GDV looks like.



Is this an emergency?

You come home from work and see your 7 year old mixed breed dog laying on the floor. He seems very lethargic and has a distended stomach. You lift up his gums and see that his gums are yellow! Do you think this is an emergency?



(Photo taken by Jenna Henderson with owner permission)



Is this an emergency?

Absolutely! This is an emergency.

This jaundice or icterus refers to the excess accumulation of a bilirubin in the blood and tissues. Bilirubin is produced by the liver and has a yellow color. When bilirubin is present in tissues for an extended period of time, you may see discoloration of body surfaces.

What could this mean? It can mean a lot of things unfortunately, but your dog should get blood work done to rule out different diseases like liver disease or obstructed gallbladder. Also, you should always visit a veterinarian if your pet has pale pink to white gums. This could mean something urgent like anemia/blood loss.

Is this an emergency?

You have been out of town for the past week and your bunny has been taken care of by your neighbor. You just came home and your bunny's caretaker reports that she hasn't eaten much and hasn't used her litter box for the last 24 hours. Is this an emergency?



Is this an emergency?

YES, this is an emergency!



Rabbits should use the bathroom every few hours. 24 hour is too long for a rabbit to go without defecating, and so this bunny needs to be seen by a veterinarian immediately for possible GI stasis. GI stasis is defined as a condition where the gastrointestinal system slows or stop completely - this can be deadly for rabbits and other herbivores. Typical treatments/diagnostics include radiographs, gastrointestinal prokinetics, intravenous fluids, and routine syringe feedings.

Is this an emergency?

Yesterday, you went to visit and ride your horse Dixie. The ride went smooth and was so fun! Today, you went back to see Dixie and she seemed off. When you go and take her out of the stall, she's limping badly on her right front leg and seems painful. She won't let you run her. She won't let you mount her. Her leg feels warm to the touch. She seems to be eating and drinking normally, but you feel something is definitely wrong. But you wonder: does this warrant an emergency room visit?





Is this an emergency?

Yes, this is urgent!

You would definitely want to have your horse seen as soon as possible by a veterinarian. The hoof pain and warm temperature indicate a possible hoof abscess or infectious laminitis, and horses rely heavily on all 4 of their legs. You want to get this treated before the abscess ruptures, or the infection spreads to the rest of the body, or secondary issues arise. Call and check in with a veterinarian to see what the next steps would be to make sure Dixie feels better soon and can ride again!

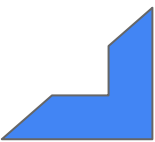


Got it. But what if I'm not totally sure if my pet needs to see a veterinarian?

If you are unsure if your pet needs to see to a veterinarian immediately:

Please reach out to the potential hospital that you would go to, and the staff will be able to chat and guide you further.

Ultimately, if you're worried, we're worried! When in doubt, please see a veterinarian.





**So your pet needs to go to an emergency
veterinary hospital. What should you
expect?**

What you need to know about the ER

- Animal ERs work like human emergency rooms
 - Patients are triaged
- An ER is going to be more expensive than your regular veterinarian
 - This is because they have to have the staffing and resources available for any type of emergency that can come through the door at any time
- The staff knows that no one *wants* to be in the ER, so they try to do everything they can to make your visit as least stressful as possible



Patients are triaged? What is that....



tri·age

/trē'äZH/

noun

(in medical use) the assignment of degrees of urgency to wounds or illnesses to decide the order of treatment of a large number of patients or casualties.

"a triage nurse"

verb

assign degrees of urgency to (wounded or ill patients).

"victims were triaged by paramedics before being transported to hospitals"

Examples of triage rankings

Less urgent:

Ear infections

Torn nails

Urinary Tract Infections

Allergies/Itchiness

Diarrhea and vomiting but stable

More urgent:

Seizures

Toxin ingestion

Hit by car

Collapse

Jaundice / Icteric

Continuous bleeding

Difficulty breathing

Versus



ER wait times....

Yes, wait times at veterinary practices (both ER and general practice) have been extremely long. Many things have contributed to this, such as:

- More people have adopted pets during the pandemic, so there is a higher demand for veterinary care.
- Practices have been short staffed due to the pandemic as well - due to staff member illnesses, employee shortages, and other reasons.

Just know that as a profession, we are all doing our best and appreciate your understanding and kindness. We all want the same thing: happy and healthy pets!

The end - Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to visit our online booth!

If there are any questions about the content, please email us at illinoissveccs@gmail.com and we are happy to discuss further.

