

**SKILLMAN - (214) 887-1400**

1910 Skillman Street
Dallas, TX 75206

OAK CLIFF - (214) 939-1600

1021 Fort Worth Avenue
Dallas, TX 75208

WHITE ROCK - (214) 324-1500

7446 East Grand Avenue
Dallas, TX 75214

PET EMERGENCIES

Dr. Kathryn Junkins Sarpong

Do you head to the pet ER, call your vet, panic, or just wait it out? How do you know what constitutes a pet emergency?

I worked several years in an animal ER and saw lots of things that could have waited and saved you some hassle and money, but there are true emergencies. Here are a few scenarios and how to judge them.

My pet is struggling to breathe–

This is always an emergency. Don't wait. Cats do not pant unless very stressed, so a panting cat is an emergency. Anytime a dog or cat has a gum color that isn't pink (excepting birthmarks), that is an emergency. Pale gums can indicate blood loss, purple or blue gums can indicate poor oxygenation, and yellow gums can indicate liver problems or blood cell destruction. Severe coughing that causes them to change gum colors is always an emergency. Coughs in animals with a history of heart problems (or murmurs) warrant a doctor consultation.

My pet has collapsed–

Seek attention immediately if your pet cannot respond to you or move. This can be cardiac, neurological, metabolic or musculoskeletal, but should be checked out immediately.

My pet just ate some medication / socks / plants/ human food–

Call your vet or Animal Poison Control. 1-888-426-4435. You may want to keep hydrogen peroxide at home if the vet recommends making your dog vomit. Always check with a veterinarian FIRST! Cats are tricky and never vomit on command- so call your vet if your kitty ate something off the usual list.

My pet may have overheated–

Take their temperature (rectally). If it is greater than 105 – seek attention. If they are collapsed, have gums that are not a normal color, seek attention no matter the number. Pour cool water over their bodies while getting into the car if they are warm. Normal pet temps are 99-102.5F.

My pet is vomiting/ has diarrhea–

If they are weak and will not eat, then it is an emergency. If they are eating and bouncing off the walls, you may be able to wait up to 12 hours to see if it resolves and call your regular vet for an appointment. If they are lethargic, then seek attention without delay.

My pet cut themselves, or has a bite wound–

If it is just a single wound less than 1 inch through skin only and you can control the bleeding, it can wait up to 24 hrs. Just keep it clean and keep your pet indoors. Use a cone or T-shirt to keep them from licking the wound. If the wound is serious, one of many wounds, deep, bleeding large amounts or your pet is acting strangely, then take them to the ER.

I just saw a worm come out of my pets–

Gross, but not an emergency by itself. Call your regular veterinarian for instructions on how to get rid of the worms!

Good luck on keeping your pet happy and healthy! 