

CPR for Dogs and Cats

Be sure to use extreme caution. Even a familiar pet may bite or scratch if they are scared and hurting.

The first step in animal CPR is to determine unresponsiveness. Once you are positive that the animal is not responding, you must ensure that there is an open airway. Open the mouth and make sure that the air passage is clear. If you see any visible obstructions, remove them. Next, extend the head to straighten the airway. With your ear close to the animal's mouth look, listen, and feel for normal breathing. If the animal is not breathing, you will need to give him 2 breaths. For a large animal, this is done by closing the animal's jaws tightly and breathing into his nose. For a small animal, you may be able to cover their nose and mouth with your mouth and then breathe. The animal's chest should rise with each breath. Next, you need to determine if the animal's heart is beating. You can determine this by taking his femoral pulse, or if you are unfamiliar with this, scan his body looking for any signs of circulation – kicking, moving, coughing, twitching, rolling their eyes, or attempting to breathe. If you see any of these signs, you know that his heart is beating and all you need to do is breathe for him. This means giving 1 breath every 5 seconds for larger animals (over 60 pounds), or 1 breath every 3 seconds for small animals (less than 60 pounds). If, however, you see no signs of circulation, most likely the animal's heart has stopped beating. Therefore, if you see no signs of circulation, you need to begin chest compressions. Lay the animal on his side and place the heels of your hands in the



middle of his ribcage, approximately where his elbow touches the chest. Compress about $\frac{1}{2}$ the depth of the animal's chest at a rate of about 3 compressions every 2 seconds. Perform 15 compressions, followed by 2 breaths. For a very small animal, such as a kitten or a bird, compressions can be performed by cradling his back in your hands and compressing the center of his chest with your thumbs. Continue compressions and breaths until the animal begins breathing on his own and shows signs of circulation, or until you are relieved by emergency veterinary care.



Choking Animal

For an animal that is choking, turn the animal upside down, with his back against your chest. With both arms wrapped around him, give repeated sharp thrusts to the abdomen until the object comes out. If the animal is heavy, lift his back legs up off the ground as if he were a wheelbarrow. Give his body a repeated shakes until the object becomes dislodged. If the object does not come out, the animal will become unconscious. Begin the basic steps of CPR, but check in the animal's mouth before each breath. If you see an



object in his mouth, pull it out. Then try a breath. Continue cycles of 15 compressions, look in his mouth, and try a breath until the animal begins breathing on his own and shows signs of circulation, or until you are relieved by emergency veterinary care.

