

VET TALK: Your Pet's First Aid Kit

By Rodger Barr DVM

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No hiking or camping trip should be undertaken without a complete first aid kit. It should include the following items:

- A roll of cotton or cast padding and VetRap, along with the knowledge of how to use them in making a bandage or a splint.
- A nail trimmer and Kwik Stop styptic powder (or silver nitrate sticks) for cracked or broken nails.
- Antihistamines (like Benadryl) and/or prednisone for allergic reactions to insect bites, which may cause rapidly developing respiratory distress and even death.
- A bell, to be placed on your dog's collar to warn and frighten unsuspecting wild animals.
- Gallon jugs of water (or access to a supply of water). In the event of overheating, you can cool your pet down before elevated body temperature can cause irreparable damage. You can even apply cold water to your pet proactively, in anticipation of a very hot day. Cooling jackets are also available. They are light but absorbent and can be soaked in cool water prior to their use on a warm day.
- A staple gun for lacerations, and the basic knowledge of how to use one.
- Pliers to pull out porcupine quills. Bring a tweezers, too.
- Tomato juice or Skunk-Off in case of a skunk encounter.
- Metronidazole for non-specific diarrheas and dosing knowledge. A 60- to 70-pound dog gets 500 mg of metronidazole twice daily until normal stools are achieved and maintained for two days. Discontinue use after four days if it is ineffective.
- Parastar Plus for fleas and ticks and Lyme disease prevention.
- Pepto-Bismol for vomiting.
- Antibiotics for infections.
- And lastly, a leash and the knowledge of how and when to use it, to help prevent the need for much of the above!