

Children's Resources: Veterinary Emergency Medicine



Veterinary Specialty of the Day:

Emergency & Critical Care

Some veterinarians undergo further training to specialize in a specific field of medicine. Emergency & Critical Care (ECC) specialists focus on treating animals in the Emergency Room (ER) and Intensive Care Unit (ICU). ECC veterinarians are trained to recognize when an animal has a life-threatening condition and to provide rapid care.

Discussion Question

- Why might a pet need to go to the emergency room?
- Why are emergency rooms important?

ECC specialists are trained to...



Monitor Vital Signs

This includes blood pressure, heart rate, body temperature, electrical activity in the heart, and gas levels in the blood.



Provide Oxygen

For animals in the ICU, sometimes oxygen cages are used, which are temperature controlled enclosures that fill with oxygen to help patients breathe.



Prioritize Critical Patients

ECC veterinarians recognize patients facing life-threatening situations and provide care accordingly.



Perform Blood Transfusions

In emergency situations, it can be important to provide donated blood to animals.

Children's Resources: Veterinary Emergency Medicine

Types of Emergencies

Respiratory



Signs of a respiratory emergency can include trouble breathing, coughing, or increased respiratory rate.

Neurological



Neurological emergencies, such as a seizure or a stroke, are related to the nervous system, which includes the brain and spinal cord.

Gastrointestinal



Gastrointestinal emergencies are related to the stomach and intestines. Signs may include vomiting, diarrhea, or drooling.

Trauma



Common traumatic injuries in pets include fractures, bite wounds, or falling from a great height.

Toxin Ingestion



Certain items can be toxic to animals, such as chocolate for dogs or lilies for cats.

Ocular



Signs of an ocular, or eye, emergency can include squinting, redness, or swelling.

Urinary & Reproductive



Abnormalities in peeing frequency or in an animal's reproductive organs can be signs of an emergency.

Inability to Rise



If an animal collapses, it is a sign of an emergency and can have many different causes.

Activities



5th Grade & Up

Pet Emergency First Aid Kit

Materials: computer/tablet, paper, pencil/pen

- The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) created several lesson plans for teachers interested in introducing their students to veterinary medicine.
- The AVMA's lesson plan "My Pet Emergency First-Aid Kit" has your child practice their researching skills by discovering what items are needed for a pet first-aid kit. This is a great opportunity to involve your child in your pet's health and well-being!
- First, discuss with your child why having a first-aid kit at home is important.
- Next, have your child research what supplies are needed in a pet first-aid kit. Once they have create a list of supplies, you can compare the list with the family first-aid kit or, if you have one already, your pet's first aid kit.
- To read the full lesson plan, follow the URL: https://www.avma.org/sites/default/files/resources/emergency_grade5.pdf

Children's Resources: Veterinary Emergency Medicine



Schwarzman
Animal Medical Center
Usdan Institute for
Animal Health Education

Activities



9th - 12th Grades

Career Exploration: Emergency & Critical Care Veterinarians

Materials: computer/tablet/phone with internet access

- The field of veterinary medicine is huge and there are many job opportunities available to those interested in pursuing a career in the field.
- If your child is interested in a career in emergency medicine, encourage them to research the various job opportunities and programs that exist.
- Need a place to start? Check out this blog on emergency veterinarians by clicking the link below: <https://www.sgu.edu/blog/veterinary/what-emergency-veterinarians-do/>