Must-Haves for Your Dog’s First Aid Kit

 If you’re like me you take your dog everywhere with you, and it’s important to make sure you’ve got everything you may need to take care of your pet in an emergency. We’ve done some research and compiled a list of the 5 absolute must-haves for your dog’s first aid kit.

# Your Dog’s Records and Vaccination Paperwork

First and foremost, your kit should always include an updated copy of your dog’s records and vaccination paperwork, stored in a waterproof bag or container. It’s also smart to include a recent photo of your dog, just in case they run off. A list of contact numbers is also helpful, and these should include your vet’s contact info, the nearest emergency veterinary clinic (and directions to it), and the phone number to a poison control center or hotline such as the ASPCA Poison Control Center, which can be reached at 1-800-426-4435.

# A Pet First Aid Handbook

If you’re in an emergency situation and need to take immediate action without the guidance of a vet, you’ll want to have one of these handy. You can find one on amazon here (link will be included).

# An Extra Leash/Pet Carrier

Used for easy transport to get your dog where they need to go quickly, without the fear of them bolting.

# A Muzzle or Soft Rope

Or strips of cloth if the other two options are not available. These can be used to prevent your dog from biting if they’re scared or in pain. Do not use any of these items if your pet is vomiting, choking, coughing, or otherwise having difficulty breathing.

# Self-Cling Bandages

Can be used for a variety of reasons, including to stop bleeding or provide temporary splint until you can get your dog to a vet.

# Other Useful Pet Items

* A creature comfort, such as their favorite toy or blanket. The sight and smell of these items can soothe an animal in a stressful situation
* A collapsible food or water dish, with a small bag of your dog’s food and favorite treats
* Extra poop bags
* Temporary identification tag to put your local contact information on your pet’s collar when traveling

# Other Items

* Adhesive tape
* Antiseptic wipes, lotion, powder or spray
* Emergency blanket
* Cotton swabs or balls
* Hydrogen peroxide (can be used to induce vomiting – do this only when advised by a poison control expert or veterinarian)
* Ice pack
* Non-latex gloves
* Digital fever thermometer (regular thermometers do not go high enough – your dog’s temp should never go above 103 degrees or below 101 degrees)
* Petroleum jelly (to lubricate the thermometer)
* Scissors with blunt ends
* Sterile saline solution
* Tweezers
* An expired credit card or sample credit card (used to scrape away insect stingers)

You can also find a variety of pre-assembled pet first aid kits on Amazon (will be a link).

Don’t forget to include any medications prescribed by your vet along with the things mentioned above and be sure to routinely check your pet’s first aid kit for any expired product.