

# Common Animal ER Requests

## Why am I not allowed to be with my pet at all times?

In order to quickly assess each patient & determine stability, monitor any changes in the status of your pet, decrease the wait times and provide a safe work environment, we do all examinations, diagnostics, treatments and surgery in our treatment area without the client being present. Emergency cases can be very traumatic for clients to see and having clients in the treatment area would inhibit patient care for all of our patients. We are a very busy practice with cases that often come in unexpectedly, and there is simply not enough room to have every client sit with their pet while we treat them. If your animal is stable and you would like to wait with your pet in an exam room, please inform the technician and we will have you wait there until a doctor is available. This can increase your wait time at our hospital but we will do our very best to treat your pet as quickly as possible.

## Why are there longer wait times at an emergency hospital?

Just like a human emergency room, we do not take appointments. This means many patients can arrive all at once and that can cause delays in the treatment of stable patients when critical animals come through the door and require immediate life-saving care. Each patient is triaged as they arrive and although we try to treat each patient on a first come, first served basis, this is not always feasible when a less stable patient comes into the hospital.

## Why is someone else's pet being seen before mine?

Just like a human emergency room, all patients are "triaged" to see what patients are more critical than others. If another patient has been moved ahead of your animal, that patient is less stable than your pet and may require life-saving efforts.

## Why does everything seem to cost more at an emergency hospital?

An emergency hospital is very expensive to maintain. The hospital must be fully staffed with emergency trained veterinarians and technicians, whether two patients come through the door or twenty. Maintaining this state of readiness and a state-of-the-art hospital with the latest equipment to treat every possible emergency that comes through the door is very costly. We do our very best to offer affordable emergency services but emergency care is typically going to be more expensive than your primary veterinarian for these reasons.

## Why can't you treat my pet for free?

This hospital is not government owned or subsidized (like county hospitals), it is a private business. Therefore, we must charge for the services and care we provide in order to stay in business and provide care for all of our patients that need us.

**Please seek veterinary care immediately if your pet exhibits any of the following problems:**

Respiratory distress (shallow, rapid or labored breathing) and/or coughing  
Fainting, dizziness, collapse or appears to have had a seizure  
Bleeding, has been involved in a recent trauma and/or has difficulty walking  
Any symptoms associated with a toxic exposure  
Lethargy, not eating, vomiting, diarrhea and/or running a fever  
A painful and/or distended abdomen  
Straining or unable to urinate  
Any facial swelling, hives and/or vomiting  
Any eye injury (squinting, discharge, foreign body, proptosed/out of socket, etc...)

# Common Emergencies at Denton County Animal ER

	EMERGENCY	PREVENTION
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL</b>	Electrocution, (near) drowning, heat stroke, hypothermia (low body temperature), choking, burns	Keep pets confined/crated indoors in an air conditioned environment with plenty of water when left alone. Never leave an animal in the car or tied to a chain unattended. Make electric cords inaccessible to animals. Make your house and yard "animal safe".
<b>FOREIGN BODY INGESTION</b>	Ingestion of clothing, hosiery, socks, string, needles, toys, rocks, balls, trash, pennies, batteries, jewelry, fish hooks, etc...	Keep pets confined/crated indoors when left alone. Don't let animals wander inside or outside without supervision. Avoid toys too small for your pet.
<b>GI DISORDER /ACUTE ABDOMEN</b>	Vomiting, diarrhea, bloat, painful abdomen, gastroenteritis, pancreatitis	Feed a high quality pet food. Never feed bones or table scraps. Avoid vigorous exercise after meals.
<b>METABOLIC DISEASES</b>	Diabetes, heart disease, kidney failure, liver disease, Addison's disease, Cushing's disease, cancer	Regular exams at your veterinarian to include lab work, x-rays, etc... Monitor changes in appetite, water consumption and eliminations.
<b>PARASITES</b>	Fleas, ticks, roundworms, hookworms, whipworms, tapeworms, coccidia, giardia, maggots, heartworms	Regular visits to your veterinarian for parasite exams and/or deworming. Heartworm and flea preventative year round whether indoor or outdoor (cats included). Keep pet in a clean environment.
<b>REPRODUCTIVE / UROGENITAL</b>	Dystocia (difficult labor), eclampsia, fading puppy/kitten, pyometra (infection of the uterus), urinary obstruction	Spay/neuter your pet. Feed a high quality pet food. Monitor your pet's eliminations.
<b>TOXIC EXPOSURE</b>	Ingestion of rat/mouse poison, chocolate, alcohol, drugs (over-the-counter, prescription, illegal), antifreeze, liquid potpourris, household products, poisonous plants, pesticides, fertilizers, snail bait, some spot-on flea products, snakebite, scorpion sting, spider bite	Keep pets confined/crated indoors when left alone. Don't let animals wander inside or outside without supervision. Store all medications in a safe location. NEVER medicate your pet without consulting a veterinarian first. Clean up well after working with toxic substances. Read labels carefully.
<b>TRAUMA</b>	Hit-by-car, bite wounds, ejected or jumped out of back of pick-up truck, gunshot, fractures, eye injuries, lacerations and puncture wounds	Keep pets leashed or in a fenced yard when outside. Keep cats indoors. Travel with pets confined to a crate. Spay/neuter your pet.
<b>VIRAL / INFECTIOUS</b>	Parvovirus, distemper, kennel cough, upper respiratory infections, feline leukemia, FIV, FIP	Have animals vaccinated at your primary veterinarian. Keep puppies/kittens away from other animals until they are fully vaccinated.

## Important Animal Emergency Tips

- ✓ Have ID tags on your pet that lists as much information and phone numbers as possible in the event your pet becomes lost. Consider microchipping. If you leave your animal in someone else's care, be sure to leave 24 hour emergency contact phone numbers so that you can be reached to authorize treatment. Have financial arrangements in order prior to your departure in the event of an emergency.
- ✓ Responsible pet ownership includes providing a safe, sheltered environment with water and quality food, preventative medicine (vaccines, spaying/neutering, flea/heartworm preventative), being prepared financially for future emergencies/illnesses (consider pet insurance, Care Credit, etc...) and having the time to spend interacting with your pet. It is important to take this responsibility seriously before making the lifetime commitment to obtain a pet.
- ✓ Keep puppies and kittens away from other animals (i.e. the park, pet stores, etc...) until all vaccinations have been completed – ONLY after the animal has completed a series of vaccines AND is at least 3-4 months of age.
- ✓ Spay your pet to avoid potential life threatening and costly complications such as difficult labor (c-section) and uterine infection (pyometra). Spaying/neutering also helps prevent mammary tumors and other forms of cancer along with diminishing aggression, urine marking, unwanted behavioral issues and pet overpopulation.
- ✓ When applying a topical flea medication, be sure to read the label and follow the instructions. Never apply a medication meant for an adult dog to a cat, kitten or puppy. Frontline, Advantage and Revolution are some of the safer products to use.
- ✓ **NEVER** medicate or try to treat your pet without consulting a veterinarian first. Many over-the-counter medications can be harmful or fatal if given to your pet. Remember, animals are NOT small people.
- ✓ **NEVER** vaccinate your pet at home because of the potential for a life-threatening allergic reaction to the vaccine(s).
- ✓ **NEVER** drive with your pet loose or tethered in the back of a pick-up truck. A secured crate or seat harness is the safest way to travel with a pet.
- ✓ **NEVER** leave an animal unattended in a vehicle. Temperatures can rapidly climb to >100 °F and can cause death in as little as 10 minutes.