

Feline CPR & First Aid Guide for Symptoms of Shock

Courtesy of <http://www.cathelp-online.com>

Feline CPR + First Aid Guide for Symptoms of Shock

The following is a guide to help you understand Feline CPR. Please do not ever perform CPR on any kitty if you are inexperienced or uncomfortable with this procedure. CatHelp-Online strongly suggests you contact your local chapter of the American Red Cross for more information on animal CPR, this organization often holds seminars and classes which you can attend to help you understand this procedure, when it might be necessary to apply it, and for more information.

Feline CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation)

Feline CPR is a procedure used to treat a kitty who is not breathing, or who has no heartbeat. Also called mouth to nose/mouth resuscitation, this procedure involves three vital principles which need to be established before proceeding in CPR. The easiest way to understanding these principles is following the "ABC's" of Feline CPR:

- Airway
- Breathing
- Circulation

Airway: Is Kitty's Airway Blocked?

Check to see if kitty's mouth and throat are clear of foreign objects or obstructions. If kitty has a foreign object or obstruction in the mouth or throat, you may need to do the following (call your vet first!):

- 1) Lay kitty down on her side
- 2) Gently tilt back kitty's head slightly back to extend the neck and head
- 3) Gently but firmly pull the tongue between the front teeth
- 4) Use your finger to gently check for any foreign object or vomit from the mouth. Remove the object or vomit if possible
- 5) * DO NOT place your fingers in the mouth of a conscious kitty, she may bite you! *

Breathing: Is Kitty Breathing?

If kitty is not breathing, you may need to do the following (call your vet first!):

- 1) Open kitty's airway
- 2) Place your hands or cup your hands over kitty's mouth and nose, allowing your lips to form a seal to deliver breaths to kitty
- 3) Place your mouth over the cup of your hands on kitty's mouth/nose
- 4) Give four or five short breaths, rapidly, then check to see if kitty is breathing on her own. If kitty is breathing normally, DO NOT PROCEED, but rather call your vet ASAP
- 5) If kitty's breathing is shallow or irregular, or that breathing does not continue, continue giving kitty respirations until you reach your veterinary hospital or for a maximum of 20 minutes. (If resuscitation continues for longer than 20 minutes, there is less likelihood that kitty will survive. Your vet can determine more)
- 6) No more than 20-30 breaths should be delivered per minute
- 7) * DO NOT ATTEMPT RESPIRATIONS ON A NORMALLY BREATHING OR CONSCIOUS KITTY! *
- 8) Contact your nearest emergency veterinary hospital immediately for further instruction

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Circulation: Does Kitty Have A Heartbeat Or Pulse?

If kitty does not have a heartbeat or pulse, you may need to do the following (call your vet first!):

- 1) Lay kitty down on her right side
- 2) Kneel next to your kitty with her chest facing you
- 3) Place the palm of your hands over kitty's ribs at the point where kitty's elbow touches the chest. Place your other hand underneath the right side of kitty.
- 4) Compress the chest 1/2 to 1 inch (your elbows should be softly locked during compression)
- 5) Chest compressions are alternated with breaths
- 6) Perform two chest compressions for each breath, then check for a pulse
- 7) With two people, one person can deliver breaths while the other performs the compressions at a rate of two compressions for each breath, then check for a pulse
- 8) * DO NOT PERFORM CHEST COMPRESSIONS ON A CONSCIOUS, NORMALLY BREATHING KITTY ! * (While gentle quick pressure is necessary during life-saving chest compressions and respirations, be very careful not to use hard force!)
- 9) Contact your nearest emergency veterinary hospital immediately for further instruction

Shock

At some point prior to the necessity of Feline CPR, your kitty may experience life-threatening shock. The following is a guideline to help you recognize the signs of shock and how to proceed:

Signs of Shock:

- Increased heart rate
- Normal to increased intensity of pulse (feels like "pounding")
- Mucous membranes may look redder than normal
- Capillary Refill Time of 1 to 2 seconds
- Body temperature may be low or elevated (as in septic shock)
- Hypothermia
- Weak pulse
- Capillary Refill Time is prolonged
- Heart rate is increased
- Mucous membranes are pale
- Depressed mental state
- Cool limbs
- Lifelessness
- Slow respiratory rate
- Slow heart rate
- Unconsciousness
- Weak or absent pulse

NOTE: At any one of these points, kitty may arrest into cardiopulmonary arrest or distress. If you suspect kitty is in shock, please get her to your nearest emergency veterinary hospital IMMEDIATELY!

First Aid for Shock:

(Call your vet first!)

- 1) Assess the ABC's of Feline CPR and administer as needed
- 2) If trauma or bleeding is evident, control the bleeding (apply direct pressure)
- 3) Warm kitty by using a thermal blanket or by placing hot water bottles by her side and/or around her body
- 4) Elevate kitty's hind end slightly by placing a blanket or towel underneath her hind end * DO NOT elevate if you suspect kitty has suffered a broken back
- 5) Transport kitty gently, to the nearest emergency veterinary hospital immediately