



Blue Springs

Animal Hospital & Pet Resort

"It's All About Caring"



Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) in Dogs

For The First Annual Pooches On The Parkway,

By Jerry Carey, DVM

CPR is a technique to reverse CPA (Cardio-Pulmonary Arrest). Said simply, CPR is an emergency procedure that attempts to revive a dog when the heart and/or lungs have stopped. A dog who needs CPR will be unconscious and unresponsive. The first step, therefore, is to confirm that your dog is unresponsive by calling your dog's name in a loud tone and attempting to get a response by gently shaking and talking to him/her. It is also important to realize that most terminal disease processes will end in CPA. You will need to decide if resuscitation is appropriate and in the best interest of your pet.

ABC'S OF CPR

A = Airway

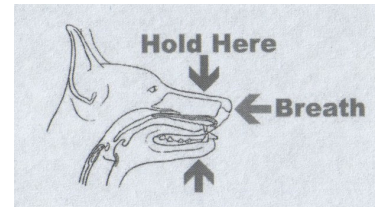
B= Breathing

C = Circulation

The ABC's should always be followed 1 2 3.

1. Airway – Is the air passageway though the mouth open? You should be able to open the mouth and look inside easily. If you can't, stop now! Your dog does not need CPR! Extend the neck and pull the tongue forward. If there is anything in the mouth, clean it out with your fingers.

2. Breathing – Is your dog breathing? Watch the chest and if, within 5 seconds at the most, you do not see the ribs move up and down, you need to blow air forcefully twice, 2 seconds each, into the dog's nose . With large dogs you should simultaneously hold the lips closed if you can't cover the mouth and nose with your mouth. If it does not start breathing move on to C.



3. Circulation – Does the animal have a pulse and are the pupils dilated? If there is no pulse and the pupils are fully dilated, you know that you also need to start chest compressions and assisted ventilation. The best place to feel the pulse is in inside the back leg up near the body. You should practice feeling your dog's pulse if you have not done this. The pupils are fully dilated if you look into the eyes and don't see the iris (that part within the eye that gives it the normal color; blue, green, etc.) The center of the eye will look like a large round dark spot.

CPR Procedure

How you proceed at this point will depend on how many people are available to help. If there are 2 people, one should get a vehicle to transport to the nearest veterinary hospital. The second starts and continues solo CPR. If you are alone, proceed with solo CPR. If there are three or four people you can proceed with two or three person CPR.

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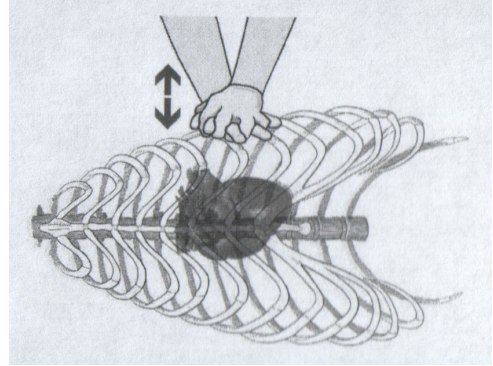
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Solo CPR

The technique for chest compression depends on the size and shape of your dog. Small dogs under 15 pounds should always be lying on their side with their right side down. Larger dogs, particularly deep chest breeds, should be lying on their backs. This could take a separate person in some breeds. If that is not possible use the right side down position. Compression rate will vary from 80 times a minute in large breeds to 120 times a minute in small breeds.

The location of compression is on the left side of the chest where the elbow touches it when flexed if the dog is on its right side. Push on the back part of the breast bone if the dog is on its back. For a small dog compressing the chest with one hand on each side of the chest is best. For the larger dog on its side or back, using two hands on top of each other and applying force with the elbows extended in fixed position works best. Each compression should reduce the distance between the ribs or from the breastbone to backbone approximately 25%. Compressions should be followed by an equal time of rest. A good practice is to count 1 and 2 and compress on the ones. You can also practice saying one and two at a rate appropriate for the size of your dog.



The ratio of chest compression to breathing is 15: 2; fifteen chest compressions, then two one second breaths, your mouth to the dog's nose. The dog is monitored for return of breathing and pulse as well as constriction of its pupils. You should continue for 20 minutes with no response before stopping.

Two Person CPR

If two people are available to stay with the dog, breathing and chest compressions are done at the same time. This will greatly increase the effectiveness of the CPR.

Three Person CPR

If three people can be with the dog, the third person applies pressure to the underside of the dog's belly just behind the ribs. They apply pressure at the same rate as the compressions and breathing, but at the rest time. During the 1 2 count the abdominal compressions are done on the count of 2 and will further increase the effectiveness of the CPR. When two or three people are giving CPR one should count out loud to help coordinate the teamwork.

Final Sad Note

Most attempts at CPR do not return a dog to normal. It is important to understand this and have realistic expectations so you do not blame yourself if it fails. In one study 5% of dogs given CPR survived. It can save lives, however, so all of us will want to give our dog that chance, especially if the arrest was due to trauma or other potentially reversible causes in an otherwise healthy dog.

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