

BAKER INSTITUTE
FOR ANIMAL HEALTH

CPR for your DOG or CAT

CPR includes **chest compressions** to get blood flowing, and **rescue breaths** to deliver oxygen to the organs.

If you find your pet unresponsive, attempt to stimulate him by shaking or calling his name. If he doesn't respond, check for breathing. If your pet is breathing, get him to the closest veterinary office.

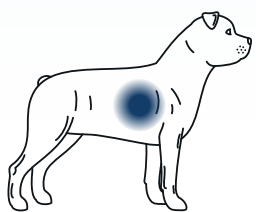
If your pet isn't breathing, check to make sure her windpipe is clear. Pull the mouth open, grasp the tongue, pull the tongue toward you and get a look all the way to the back of the throat. If you see something in there, gently try to remove it. Be careful not to push it further into the airway. If this invokes a response from your pet, stop! Beware of bites.

If a response is not elicited, call for help. CPR is a team sport and remember, your primary goal is to get your pet to the closest open veterinary hospital. So ask your helper to go and get the car immediately while you start CPR.

Start by doing **30 chest compressions**, pause to deliver **2 quick breaths**, then immediately **repeat** both steps.

Chest Compressions:

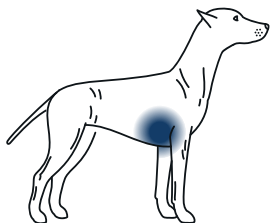
Find Your Compression Location



Dogs with round chests

(such as Labrador Retrievers)

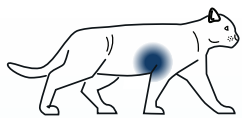
Lay the dog on his side and focus the chest compressions over the widest part of the chest.



Dogs with narrow, deep-chests

(such as Greyhounds)

Lay her on her side, but push directly over the heart to try to squeeze it.



Small dogs and cats

(generally all have a narrow chest)

Focus your compressions directly over the heart. To minimize the chance of squeezing too hard, you could do compressions with one hand, rather than the two-handed approach.



Dogs with squishy-faces

sometimes have flat chests

(like English Bulldogs)

Try laying them on their backs. Put your hands directly over the breastbone and push on the solid piece of bone. If the dog doesn't easily stay on his back, lay him on his side and do compressions as you would for a round chested dog.

Get in Position

1. Kneel or stand behind your pet.

2. Put one hand on top of the other with the fingers interlaced.

Focus the force of your compression on the heel of the hand that's touching the chest.

3. Place your shoulders directly above your hands and keep your elbows locked.

Bend at the waist, not at the elbows.

4. Compress at least 1/3 and no more than 1/2 the width of the chest.

For medium to large breed dogs, you'll have to push hard to compress the chest by 1/3! In small dogs and cats, it's easy to push too hard, so be sure not to compress more than 1/2 the width of the chest!

5. Aim for about 100 – 120 compressions per minute,

or about two compressions every second. Sing a song in your head to keep the right beat such as "Stayin' Alive".



Rescue Breaths

1. Close the mouth.

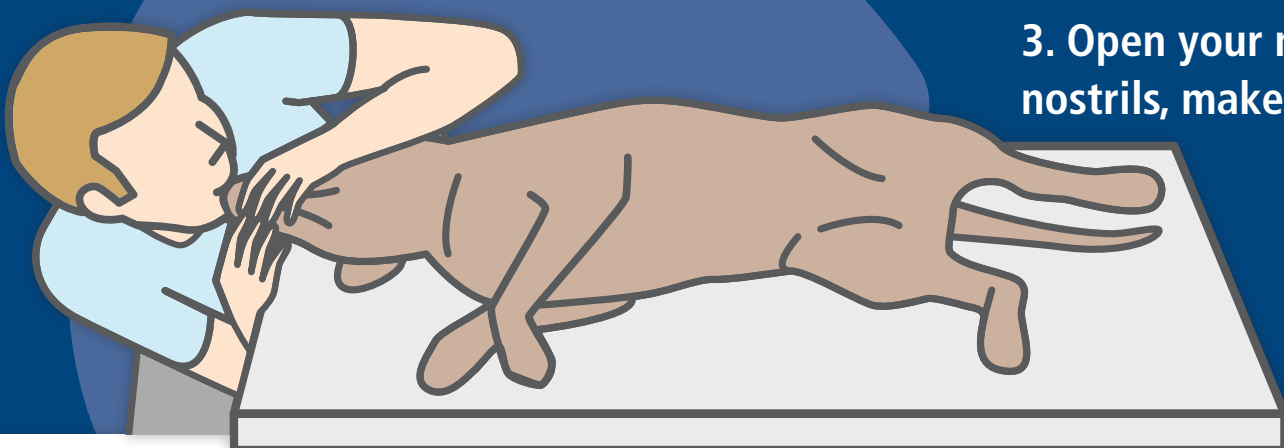
2. Make sure your pet's windpipe is as straight as possible.

Head should be flat on the table or floor and the tip of the nose should be aligned with the spine.

3. Open your mouth, put it over both of the pet's nostrils, make a seal, and deliver a breath.

4. Allow the pet to exhale and repeat for one more breath.

Blow hard and quickly and make sure that you see your pet's chest move.



Tip

If you have another person to help, one person should do chest compressions and the other should deliver rescue breaths. After two minutes, switch positions. Chest compressions are tiring!

As soon as someone is available with transportation, load your pet into the car and continue CPR as you travel to the nearest vet.

CPR requires manual skills that are best learned from an expert. That's why it's best to get certified in Pet CPR before there's a crisis! Learn more at: ecornell.com/courses/veterinary-courses/pet-cpr/



Cornell University
College of Veterinary Medicine



recoverinitiative.org

The Baker Institute is committed to improving animal health through scientific discovery. Visit our website to learn about our research and how you can support our mission.
vet.cornell.edu/baker