

Perth Vet Emergency First Aid Book – A Guide to Common Pet Emergencies

Author: Dr Angela See BVSc, MAVVSc (Medical and Emergency Critical Care)

Book Review by Geoff Birkbeck

After taking my four legged best mate to the doggy doctors recently, I noticed this book on the counter. Being only \$10.00 and locally produced, I purchased a copy out of interest and was very surprised.

Perth Vet Emergency First Aid Book – A Guide to Common Pet Emergencies is a soft covered booklet on dealing with first aid emergencies for domesticated animals, in particular, dogs.

Authored by Dr Angela See BVSc, MAVVSc (Medical and Emergency Critical Care) of Perth Vet Emergency, one of the 24 hour veterinary emergency hospitals in Perth, with input from several other veterinary doctors and associated staff.

The outstanding feature of this book is that is well researched with an easy readability factor of life threatening and common ailments that are applicable to the Western Australian environment. Although international references have been made it applies to our pets.

It's a simple, easy to read guide on the most common situations affecting domesticated animals which covers a comprehensive list. In the section of handling and transporting the patient,

the reader is advised to take caution when driving the "patient" to veterinary care. Good advice when dealing with a highly emotional issue in an emergency.

The format is easy to read and simply but well set out. Rather than listing the ailment or injury, the format has heading such as *Problem* (then a description) or *TRAUMA*,

For example:

- *Problem: My pet may have a broken leg or my pet has a penetrating wound/bleeding (page 6)*
- *TRAUMA: My pet has been hit by a car or My pet has been attacked by another animal (page 5)*

Continuing with *Symptoms, Emergency Treatment* and *What to expect from the Vet*.

Important information is highlighted in pale red boxes on the page.

First Aid treatment and what to do is listed in easy to follow dot points.

On page 1 the book goes straight into CPR instructions under the headings of:

Problem: My pet has stopped breathing and

- *Problem: My Pets' heart has stopped*

However, the reviewer suggests that these pages be earmarked or colour coded for easy referral in an emergency.

Other common problems include , vomiting, heatstroke, near drowning, snake bite, spider and insect stings, seizure, head trauma, poisoning and toxicology, just to name a few.

All these issues are listed on the PVE website in the same easy to follow format as the book.

There is a good guide to plants that are toxic to pets from the ASPCA (the US version of the RSPCA) included that are applicable to our local environment.

The graphics are a mixture of photographic and clip art that are not distressing to the reader.

Although aimed predominately at dogs, there are some cat specific conditions explained as well.

On the down side, the book refers to “symptoms” rather than “signs” From “human” first aid training; the three elements that make up a diagnosis are: *History* – the story what happened, *Signs* – what you see and *Symptoms* – what the causality tells you.

As “sign” is what you see, our pets cannot describe what is wrong but we see it. Hopefully in the reprint this will be rectified.

Some of the illustrations have no captions or explanations. On page 3 shows an artist’s rendition of a dog with what appears to be restraint straps but there is no reference to its application.

Also, a section of recognising diabetic conditions in pets would be useful too.

In conclusion, *Perth Vet Emergency First Aid Book – A Guide to Common Pet Emergencies* is a “must have” for any pet owner, Ranger or anyone involved in animal welfare

Comprehensively well researched and based on local experience, easy to follow reading format and very well priced.

It is resource material only, in the final notes of the book, there is reference to obtaining veterinary aid as soon as possible as many pets die due to not receiving timely treatment.

This booklet can be carried in your animal welfare kit, home and office and highly suited for any ranger that has animal contact.

It is available at your local vet or by contacting Pet Vet Emergency on (08) 9204 0400 or www.pve.net.au

Cost \$10.00.

About the reviewer.

Geoff Birkbeck is a ranger with local government service for 4 years. Worked in the Pilbara and Gascoyne regions for 2 years and currently doing contract ranger and fire control duties. Geoff has a police and emergency service background and has a strong interest in animal control and welfare issues. He hopes to contribute more product and services review of items of interest applicable to ranger services on a regular basis.

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