Common Emergencies in the UK and Immediate Actions

Extreme Cold Weather

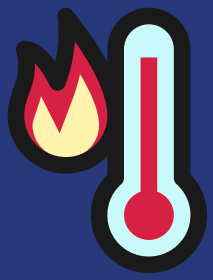
Ensure your pets have warm, dry clothing for outdoor trips and check their paws after walks for ice, grit or salt. Consider reflective or light-up collars, harnesses or tags during dark winter walks to make pets easier to see and locate.

Storms & power cuts

Keep pets indoors and provide a secure, comfortable space away from potential hazards. Never leave animals outside during extreme weather.

Flooding

Move pets to a higher level where possible.
Keep leads, carriers and essential identification details easily accessible.



Heatwaves and extreme heat

Avoid exercising or taking pets outside during the hottest part of the day. Walk dogs in the early morning or later evening, provide fresh drinking water and make sure animals always have access to shade and a cool place to rest. Never leave pets in cars, even for a short time.

Bites & stings

Be alert for bites or stings from wasps, bees, spiders, ticks and other insects. Monitor your pet for swelling, pain, breathing difficulties or signs of an allergic reaction, and seek veterinary advice promptly if symptoms are severe or your pet appears unwell.

Fire (home or forest fire)

Get pets out as quickly and safely as possible. Use a carrier or crate where appropriate and keep an emergency kit close to an exit.



Unexpected illness or hospitalisation

Make sure a trusted friend, neighbour or family member can step in by leaving clear care instructions and up-to-date contact details.

Evacuation (local or regional)

Take every pet with you and never assume you'll be able to return for them. Keep your pet emergency plan ready so you can leave quickly.

Injuries

Keep your pet as still as possible and transport them to your veterinary practice. Remember that even the friendliest pet may bite when they are in pain.

Toxicity

If you think your pet has swallowed something poisonous, do not wait for signs of illness before contacting your veterinarian. Note what your pet has eaten, how much of it, when it happened and current symptoms