

First Aid for Allergic Reactions and Insect Stings

Overview

- Allergic reactions and insect stings are common in pets, especially in dogs.
- Most don't cause a major problem, but some can be severe and even life threatening.
- If your pet is having an allergic reaction, they may develop swelling (commonly on the face), redness or a rash, and in more severe cases, difficulty breathing.
- Get vet help ASAP if your pet is showing signs of an allergic reaction.

What to do if your pet has an allergic reaction or is stung by an insect



This cat developed a swollen chin after being stung by a wasp

Step one: Check your pet

Check for signs of a severe allergic reaction:

- Rapid swelling - often of the lips, eyes, ears and face
- [Breathing difficulties](#)

- If your pet has stopped breathing, read our [CPR](#) advice
- Vomiting or diarrhoea
- Collapse/ fainting

Other signs of a less severe allergic reaction include:

- Skin rash/ bumps
- Mild swelling elsewhere on the body
- Drooling
- Limping if the legs or feet are affected

Step two: For severe reactions

- Go straight to your vets if your pet is having difficulty breathing, or if their face/neck/throat is swelling up quickly.
- If possible, phone your vets on the way to let them know you are coming.

Covid-19 update: During lockdown, it's important to call your vet practice to check they are open before you arrive. If they are closed, it's likely that you will be directed to another local practice.

Step two: For a mild reaction

- If your pet is suffering from a mild allergic reaction (no breathing problems or rapid swelling), call your vet for advice.
- They may need medication such as anti-histamines and other anti-inflammatories to keep them comfortable and stop their reaction getting worse.

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