



# Severe Pain in Pets

## Overview

- If your pet is in pain, contact your vet. If they are in severe pain, it could be an emergency. Severe pain often indicates a serious problem, even if the cause isn't obvious.
- Signs of severe pain include crying, hissing/growling or protecting a part of the body.

## First aid



### Stay calm

- Reassure your pet with a soothing voice.

### Protect yourself

- Even the friendliest pet can scratch or bite if they are in pain.
- If necessary, use a muzzle or towel to protect yourself but **never use a muzzle if your pet is struggling to breathe** or have an injury on their face.

### Move your pet to a safe space

- Make sure both you and your pet are safe, and if necessary, gently move them.
- If necessary, use a blanket, board or towel to help move them.



## Call your vet

- Call your vet for advice.

## If your pet has a life-threatening problem

- Such as trouble breathing or heavy bleeding, take them to your vet as soon as possible.
- Call your vet while you are on your way to let them know you are coming.

## Symptoms

Severe pain is usually obvious, but some pets try to hide it as much as they can. Some of the common symptoms of being in pain include:

- Crying
- Rapid breathing
- Lying very still/being rigid
- Protecting an area of their body
- Growling or hissing, especially when touched
- [Tooth grinding \(especially rabbits\)](#)
- Wide pupils

## Possible causes

There are many different things that can cause pain including:

- [Wounds](#)
- [Broken bones](#)
- Internal injuries
- Bloating
- Burns
- [Bone cancer](#)
- Spinal problems such as a slipped disc
- [Pancreatitis](#)

Published: May 2020