

## First aid for bruises

### Overview

- Most bruises can be managed at home and heal within approximately two weeks.
- However, multiple bruises or unexplained bruises can be a sign of a much more serious problem such as a bleeding/clotting disorder.
- All bruises (no matter how small) should be monitored.
- Always have your dog checked if they have any very large bruises, painful bruises or multiple, unexplained bruises.

### What to do if your pet has a bruise



#### Step one: **check your pet**

- If you notice a bruise on your pet, check them for any other bruises, any wounds and other signs of illness.
- Multiple unexplained bruises can be a sign of a clotting/bleeding problem (which are rare but can be serious).
- Bruises after an operation are common, but should be monitored closely.

### Step two: **cold compress**

- Cooling a new developing bruise can help reduce swelling and further bruising, but this is only helpful for new bruises, not old ones.
- You can make a cold compress by wrapping an ice pack (or some frozen peas!) in a towel.
- Place the cold pack gently on the bruise for ten minutes and stop if your pet becomes uncomfortable or distressed.
- If your pet has had an operation, you can very gently put a cold compress on the area and carefully clean around the wound, but try not to touch the wound itself as this might stop it from healing.

### Step three: **monitor the bruise**

- All bruises should be monitored closely
- Most disappear after about two weeks.

### Step four: **contact your vet**

Contact your vet for advice if your pet has:

- a very large or unexplained bruise
- multiple bruises
- a bruise that is growing quickly (especially after an operation), it might be completely normal but should be monitored
- a very painful bruise
- a bruise that has lasted more than two weeks

Published: March 2020