**First Aid**

Unfortunately, occasionally things can go wrong with your puppy and accidents do happen. Here are some of the more common problems we see, especially in puppies.

**Dropped or trodden on.** This is probably the most common accident we see. The worst scenario is the chest has been crushed and the puppy is struggling for breath. He needs oxygen, so get him to your veterinarian as soon as possible. More commonly the puppy is just bruised and needs some time in a quiet environment to recover. If he is consistently carrying a leg, put him somewhere quiet, say on a towel in a box, and make an appointment for him to be checked. Puppy’s bones are soft and greenstick fractures are relatively common. Your veterinarian will see this on x-ray and provide the support and treatment he needs.

**Cuts and grazes**. Many cuts and abrasions need only to be cleaned with saline and you will be surprised at how quickly they heal. Continual licking of the wound by the pup may delay healing, in which case the wound may need to be covered, or an Elizabethan collar applied. Deeper wounds that bleed heavily will require more treatment and possibly surgery to ligate blood vessels and suture the wound. While you are getting him to the veterinarian, if the blood flow is continuous, apply pressure to the wound with gauze or a bandage. If blood soaks through the bandage apply another over the top but do not remove the first bandage.

**Heat stroke.** Unfortunately, we see cases of this every summer. Almost always it is caused by leaving a puppy in the car while the owner pops out for a few minutes and then gets delayed. It is amazing how quickly the car can heat up, even if the day is partly cloudy. Treatment is to cool your puppy as soon as possible. Give access to cool water as your puppy will be panting to lose heat and a cool bath also will help. If the puppy is really distressed, panting excessively, or even losing consciousness, get him to your veterinarian as soon as possible.

**Poisoning.** (Most commonly rat bait) Many puppies, and some adult dogs, will eat anything, and this includes things such as rat bait. In fact some will attack closed packets of rat bait to get at the poison. If you see your puppy eat poison, or suspect he has, contact your veterinarian. We will immediately make him vomit which confirms if he has recently had the rat bait, (it contains a dye) as well as removing the poison from his system. Your veterinarian will then advise whether he needs any further treatment.

**Swallowing Things They Shouldn’t**. Puppies are inherently curious. Anything and everything they find has to be played with and perhaps chewed, which often means, swallowed. Things we have removed from the insides of puppies include pieces of Lego, wheels off toys, pantyhose, lumps of corn cob and nasties such as fish hooks. Fortunately, in most cases things will pass through and if you see your puppy swallow something he shouldn’t, we will usually advise to be patient and wait. However, if he becomes dull and starts vomiting, or we know it is something that is likely to penetrate the bowel, we will x-ray to get an idea where it is, and go to surgery.

These are some of the accidents that may befall your puppy, but don’t let this list put you off getting a puppy. The fun you will have far outweighs the chances of one of the above happening.