

Dog_Emergency_2004.txt

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Text File

(304) 683-4648

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From: Warlord

Re: Dog Emergency

I am sitting up with My dog that just popped ALL of his stitches. It's 4:35am. The Blizzard of '96 is in full swing and there aint no getting out. Good time to discuss Animal first aid. My 65 pound Shar-pei "Ling" went to the vet last week to get "Fixed" and get a tumor removed from his right front leg (just above the elbow). I knew there was gonna be a problem when I went to pick him up from the Vet and they told me he had chewed a stitch out of his groin and almost bled to death. When I got him home the NEXT day he started bleeding bad from just above the joint in his elbow and finially tonight a stitch at that site popped. It was one continuous suture instead of a bunch of little ones, so soon my dog was hanging open down 4 inches of his leg, with the accompanying Blood, muscle and gore (YUCK).

I Knew he was in trouble. We Called the vet when the stitch Popped and they basically said "deal with it, no one is in the office" (DUH!!! Maybe thats why we called the after hours emergency number... a little advice would have been nice. Guess this vet dont need the business). A 4x4 bandage wasn't slowing the blood down much at this point, and We were getting scared (The dog wasn't scared a bit... but my wife and I were!!!).

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My "DO SOMETHING, ANYTHING" mode kicked in and I got a tube of Neosporin, a bottle of iodine rinse, some cloth tape and a bottle of super glue. My wife held the front of the dog and gave him peppermints while I worked. After rinsing the site good with the Iodine solution, I applied a healthy amount of the Neosporin. I put a dot of super glue on each side of his open incision and stuck the cloth tape to one "dot" and then the other, pulling the incision closed... YOUR dog will not like this AT ALL, Super-glue gets HOT when it touches both cloth and skin (like dripping it on your jeans), Shar-pei have desensitized skin by breeding so this was not a concern to me... Besides, we only had the "grab the sewing kit" option left so I felt this to be the least painful method for all concerned.

After closing the site I applied a 4x4 sterile pad and wrapped it all up loosely with sterile gauze. He doesn't like it, so I am sitting up to keep him from pulling it off until My wife relieves me. I also Crushed up a sleeping pill and gave it to him in some ham so he is now resting comfortably (probably not medically sound advice but I am the one having to make the calls right now).

When I get to the Vet and find out what I SHOULD have done I'll let everyone know, but the point of this is that in an Emergency YOU will be the one making the decisions, right or wrong, and you should learn as much as you possibly can to help you make the right decisions. The more you Know the more confident you will feel about your actions. You will Probably have to improvise so every once in a while say "What if....." and let your mind brain-storm through a senario TO IT'S CONCLUSION. I messed up here... I know how to suture, and I actually planned for an animal emergency when I got Ling, like cuts, broken bones, Etc... My Mistake? I HADN'T planned on him being Conscious... I had no safe way to put him "Under" so I couldnt stitch him. It never crossed my mind. Also, what about the fur around the site, it must be removed (The vet had done it in this case). More later...

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Re: Dog Emergency 2

Here is the addendum I promised. The vet started to leave my Homemade butterflys on my dog cause he was closed up good... but I raised hell about infection and all. They put him under and did a much better job with stronger, tighter, and more individual sutures this time around.

I asked what else could/should have been done to him... the answer... "Nothing..this looks REAL good." They gave us a 2 week supply of anti-biotic for the slight infection and a 2 week supply for "future use". Also I picked up (literally "picked up" while no one was looking) a little supply of the sedative they put him to sleep with and a few dozen sutures, I rolled up a 20 dollar bill and stuck it into the box of sutures (Hey, supplies are supplies, sometimes you have to get "creative" with your aquisitions).

I hope my experience with this helps someone out there. Learn a few basic medical skills and they will cover a lot of ground. Also learn to suture! It's easier than it looks and you can learn from a book and practice on a chicken breast (Remove the sutures if you decide to cook it :)). Also be sure to get CLOTH (NOT paper) medical tape at least 1 inch wide. I would (and did) throw a small bottle of super glue into the med kit. In an emergency this would work on humans also (insert usual and customary legal disclaimers here). Now if I must do this type of emergency work to one of my Children out in the middle of the woods I have some experience to guide me.

I was very lucky in this case that I had help to hold the dog, AND that Shar-pei were bred to be pit fighters in China and therefore feel little or no pain in their hide. I have heard of people sewing them up with NO sedation and they don't seem to care... I believe this because Ling didn't even flinch once through this whole ordeal, he was more interested in eating the peppermint candy my wife gave him.