VMCLI
Veterinary Medical Center of Long Island
24 Hour Emergency & Specialty Services

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Diplomate American Board of Veterinary Practitioners (Avian)

Dentistry & Oral Surgery

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Emergency

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Emergency & Critical Care

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Bethany Howe, DVM
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Headline: What to Do in an Emergency

Do you know who to call if your pet faces an emergency when your vet's office is closed?

"It's vitally important that you know how to find immediate care around the clock," says Dr. Robert Composto, DVM Director of the Veterinary Medical Center of Long Island, a 24 Hour Emergency and Specialty Hospital. "You need to be prepared before a situation arises."

The first step: Ask your veterinarian for a recommendation to a 24 Hour Emergency and Specialty Hospital in your area. "Post that information in a visible spot," says Dr. Composto, "along with the animal poison control hotline." (ASPCA Hotline is 888-426-4435.)

How do you know if your pet is facing a real emergency? "If something seems wrong, take action," says Dr. Composto. "In an emergency, early medical intervention offers your pet the best possible outcome."

Some warning signs: bleeding from any body cavity/orifice; bloody diarrhea; distended abdomen, retching, or belching; exposure to severe heat or cold; foaming or bleeding from the mouth; hit by an automobile or otherwise subjected to physical trauma; open-mouth breathing (especially in a cat); pacing; pale, blue or purple gums; repetitious vomiting; toxic ingestion (human medication, rat poison, antifreeze, motor oil or any suspicious substance); unconscious, unresponsive or extremely lethargic.

"If your pet suffers trauma but seems fine, there still may be internal damage," says Dr. Composto. "It's better to be overly cautious than to wait and have disastrous results."

Compliments of Veterinary Medical Center of Long Island a 24 Hour Emergency and Specialty Hospital, 75 Sunrise Highway, West Islip, 631-587-0800, **www.vmcli.com**