

## **BASIC FIRST AID**

PLEASE NOTE: THE TOPIC ON THIS INFORMATION SHEET IS FIRST AID.  
(Not to be confused with sickness & illness).

The following information is a basic guide to first aid for your parrot, and covers the main reasons to have to assist your bird before the need of the vet.

If you find your bird is sick keep him warm. The temperature should be at least 30C 86F, WHERE POSSIBLE MAINTAIN A CONSTANT HEAT BETWEEN 35°C - 37°C - remember the smaller the bird the higher you will need the temperature.

You could use an infra-red lamp, an electric blanket, or place him near a heater or use a hot water bottle wrapped in a towel.

If you are going to the vets place him in a carrier ready. Keep the bird as quiet as possible and in the dark. To stop dehydration, encourage the bird to drink. If he will not or cannot drink on his own use a plastic syringe to do this using glucose, polyaid or spark (from the bird care range or Pets Paradise), or fresh lukewarm water.

Have a carrier to place your bird into, any towel that is used must be plain and of a pastel colour so as not to further stress your bird. Remember create a warm, dark and cosy environment for your sick bird.

**BLEEDING** - Bleeding can occur from a broken blood feather, a damaged claw or a chipped beak.

**FIRSTLY KEEP CALM** - your bird will sense your anxiety and start to flap, making matters worse. Use cornflour or a styptic pencil - on a claw or beak add a generous amount of cornflour and put pressure on the wound for 2 - 3 minutes. If your bird is calm this should be long enough. Should he still be bleeding do the process again, keeping the pressure on longer, a bird should not bleed for more than 5 minutes.

With a damaged beak, your bird if he wants to eat, he can only have soft foods.

With a damaged claw, he may not be able to perch properly.

The most common bleed is from a broken blood feather. When this happens, blood will continue to pump around the birds body, making it look as though there is a lot of blood, again try not to panic as this will panic your bird even more, resulting in there being more blood loss.

At this point there are two things you can do. You can fill the shaft of the feather with cornflour to see if you can stop the bleeding. Apply pressure, OR pull the feather. To do this you **MUST** pull the feather at the base of the shaft, pulling it out completely, this should then stop the bleed straightaway. This is not easy for the inexperienced as the feather must be pulled out quickly, firmly and in the right direction so as not to cause more problems and **DISTRESS**.

For a **SKIN LACERATION** do not apply cornflour to the wound, clean with sterile water and apply pressure for 2 - 5 mins with a pad or gauze. Then assess the need for stitches and contact the vet. For a small cut keep the wound clean with warm water.

For a large cut do not clean but apply pressure to the wound. Take immediately to your vet for stitches.

If you cannot control a bleed and you are travelling to the vets you will need someone to go with you to keep the pressure on whilst travelling. Bleeding should clot within 5 minutes.

# Leicestershire Parrot Club

**BURNS** - Wash all burns with cold water & CALL VETS FOR FURTHER ADVICE. Aloe vera gel can be used, as this has soothing properties.

**BROKEN BONES** - You may need to restrain your bird into a towel to prevent further damage.

**PLACE BIRD IN A CARRIER READY FOR THE VETS.** Keep warm and in a dark area. Apply gauze to an open wound.

**CAT SCRATCHES** - These can be very toxic to birds. The claws carry the bacteria *pasteurella multocida* which can cause septicemia. Clean the wound with warm water. CONTACT YOUR VETS WITHOUT DELAY.

**OBJECTS IN THE CROP** - If an object is stuck in the crop, should part of this object be protruding from the mouth, see if you can gently remove it. Sometimes if it is further into the crop it can be removed by massage, this can be tried if you are experienced but you could make matters worse. As this could be life threatening CONSULT YOUR VETS WITHOUT DELAY.

**OVERHEATING** - Spray with cool water onto feet and body only and monitor the birds condition.

**SHOCK** - Remember that with any of the above conditions your bird will most likely be in shock, this can obviously make the whole situation much worse, should you be able to do so administer guardian angel, again through the pipette into the beak.

**POISONING** - Prevention is always the best policy, but if you think your bird has eaten something toxic then try and flush it out of the mouth with water. CONTACT THE VET WITHOUT DELAY.

**TOXIC FUMES** - Remove the bird to a well-ventilated area. CONTACT THE VET WITHOUT DELAY.