



# Breathing Emergency: Go Now

The signs that mean a vet right now, not in the morning

PETSLIKEMINE  
BREATHING & AIRWAYS

PET NAME	KNOWN CONDITION	VET PRACTICE	OUT-OF-HOURS
_____	_____	_____	_____

Most changes in breathing are not emergencies, but a few are, and breathing trouble can turn serious fast. These signs mean go now, do not wait, and do not stop to film.

## GO TO A VET STRAIGHT AWAY IF YOU SEE

A cat breathing with its mouth open; blue, grey, white or brick-red gums or tongue in any pet; fast, heaving, belly-led breathing at rest; a pet that cannot lie down or settle, standing with elbows out and neck stretched forward to drag air in; collapse or fainting; a flat-faced dog overheating and struggling to breathe; coughing up pink froth. Phone ahead and go.

## WHILE YOU HEAD IN

- Keep them calm and as cool as you can; open a window, turn off the heating
- A cat: minimal handling, a quiet covered box, straight to the car
- Do not give old or human medicines unless your vet tells you to
- Carry a struggling pet rather than making it walk; let it pick the position it can breathe in
- A hot flat-faced dog: cool (not ice-cold) water over the body on the way

## HOW TO CHECK THE GUMS

Lift the lip and look at the gum above a tooth. Healthy is a salmon pink. Blue, grey, white or a dark brick-red is an emergency, it means the blood is not carrying enough oxygen.

## KEEP TO HAND

Day practice: [phone] . Out-of-hours: [phone] . Nearest emergency vet: [write in] .

Written and reviewed by Dr Alastair Greenway MRCVS and Claire Greenway BVM&S MRCVS. This sheet explains and records. It does not diagnose or prescribe. Always follow your own vet's instructions.

**How to use.** With breathing, when in doubt, ring the same day, and the signs above mean go now. Keep your out-of-hours number on the fridge before you ever need it.

**WITH BREATHING, WHEN IN DOUBT, GO NOW**