





## Practical Triage Guide: from early warning signs to urgent veterinary intervention

 <b>Clinical signs/symptom</b>	 <b>Monitor</b>	 <b>Seek advice</b>	 <b>Urgent vet visit</b>
<b>Vomiting/diarrhoea</b>	Occasional vomiting/soft stools/mild diarrhoea: → Keep hydrated and offer a bland or veterinary recommended diet.	If symptoms persist or increase in frequency, intensity or severity, book a vet telehealth consult or appointment with your local vet.	Severe frequent vomiting/blood in stools/inability to defecate: → Seek urgent veterinary care and keep hydrated and warm.
<b>Lameness (limping)</b>	Mild/occasional lameness: → Allow rest and monitor for improvement.	If lameness persists or worsens, book a vet telehealth consult or appointment with your local vet.	Sudden, severe lameness: → Restrict movement and seek urgent veterinary care.
<b>Cuts, sore paw pads or broken nails</b>	Minor cuts, abrasions and discomfort: → Gently clean the affected area and protect from rough/wet surfaces. → Keep clean and monitor for signs of infection.	If in doubt, a vet telehealth consult can advise on how to care for the affected area and when to make an appointment with your local vet.	Heavy bleeding that doesn't quickly stop, exposed bone or ligament, marked pain/discomfort or torn nails: → Try to stem the bleeding, restrict movement and seek urgent veterinary care.
<b>Itchy skin/visible rash/ fleas or flea dirt</b>	Mild itching/mild rash/visible fleas or flea dirt: → Implement flea control and monitor skin for signs of infection.	If scratching persists or leads to visible wounds, book a vet telehealth consult or appointment with your local vet.	If moist, sticky wound develops and starts to smell: → Seek urgent veterinary care.
<b>Reduced appetite or loss of appetite</b>	Investigate for dental issues; ensure hydration and offer favourite foods, warmed to room temperature to release tasty odours.	If symptoms persist, book a vet telehealth consult or appointment with your local vet.	If symptoms are of sudden onset and accompanied by vomiting and/or diarrhoea, seek urgent veterinary care.
<b>Coughing, sneezing, or irritated/inflamed/ weepy eyes</b>	Mild or occasional coughing/sneezing: → Monitor for discharge and signs of infection.	If respiratory symptoms persist or increase in frequency, intensity or severity, book a vet telehealth consult or appointment with your local vet.	If eyes become irritated, swollen or suddenly start to weep, book an urgent appointment with your local vet.
<b>Excessive restlessness, pacing, inappropriate barking or vocalization, aggression or other behavioural changes</b>	Mild anxiety: → Provide a safe space and use calming tools or techniques.	If symptoms persist or escalate, consult a veterinary behaviourist or book a vet telehealth or local vet appointment to diagnose underlying cause.	Sudden aggression, especially directed at humans: → Seek urgent veterinary care.
<b>Gaining or losing weight</b>	Investigate diet and activity levels. If feeding commercial pet food, ensure to follow the feeding guidelines on the back of pack.	If weight gain or loss is unexplained, consider a vet telehealth consult or book an appointment with your local vet.	Sudden weight gain or loss can require urgent veterinary attention.
<b>Increased or decreased thirst</b>	Investigate changes in diet and urination (increased/decreased volume, frequency and/or straining): → Monitor for pain, discomfort or behavioural changes.	If change in water consumption is unexplained or you notice a concurrent change in urination, consider a vet telehealth consult or book an appointment with your local vet.	If your pet stops drinking completely over the course of 24 hours, seek urgent veterinary care.