

## Feline First Aid

**Knowing some basic first-aid techniques can help you save your kitten's life.**

*Arnold Plotnick, DVM*

Do not try to manipulate the bones back into place, and do not wash out open fractures. If the kitten becomes too stressed during splint application, stop and take it to the veterinarian immediately.<sup>6</sup> Poisonings: The average household contains many items poisonous to kittens. Common toxic substances include ammonia, antifreeze, aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, bleach, gasoline, lye, paint thinner, rat poison, turpentine and rubbing alcohol. Indoor and garden plants are a potential problem as well. Kittens love to nibble on plants and dried flowers. Some plants merely cause an upset stomach. Others can be fatal. Cacti, dieffenbachia, mistletoe, poinsettia, acorns, English holly, tulip flower bulbs, oleander, honeysuckle and most lilies are poisonous to some degree. Always check with your veterinarian before administering medication to your kitten. Signs of poisoning vary depending on the type of poison and quantity ingested. You should be suspicious that your cat has been poisoned if you see signs such as excessive salivation, vomiting, loss of consciousness or seizures. If you see your cat ingest a toxic substance, call your veterinarian and be ready to describe what the poison is, the active ingredients, how much and when it was ingested, and what signs your kitten is showing. If you visit the vet, bring a sample of the suspected poison in its original container. If your vet cannot be reached, call a local or national animal poison control center for instructions. Read the label to see if specific instructions for treatment are given. If not, induce vomiting using syrup of ipecac or hydrogen peroxide: one teaspoon per 5 pounds of body weight. Don't induce vomiting if a strong acid or alkali, or a petroleum distillate like kerosene was ingested. First aid is not meant to replace veterinary care. However, knowledge of basic first aid allows kitten owners to effectively handle emergencies until a veterinarian can be reached. Knowing the basics may save your kitten's life.