

WHAT DO YOU NEED IN A FIRST AID KIT?

BY JULIE AVERSA

First step in creating a first aid kit for our rabbits is to identify some of the things that can arise in a rabbitry:

- Fly Strike
- Wry Neck
- Coccidiosis
- Worms
- Mites
- Wool Block
- Torn Toenail
- Urine scald (hutch burn)
- Heat stress
- Wounds
- Going off feed
- Eye injuries
- Broken bones

These are just to name a few. You don't want anything to happen to your herd, but it is inevitable that there may be some sort of emergency, injury, or illness in your rabbitry's future. So, you want to be prepared. I would like to suggest you keep a rabbit first aid kit on hand to deal with the most common situations that can happen.

When something happens, you will be glad you prepared in advance. Now that we have established how important it is to keep a kit, let's go through all the things you may need in your kit.

I highly recommend that you get some sort of container to keep all of these items in so they are easy to find or grab in case of an emergency or an evacuation. Something sturdy and waterproof would be ideal.

MY First Aid checklist would be:

- A card with you Veterinary Contact information on it.
- **Gauze pads**- Used to clean and care for wounds. Also, for application of medicine.
- **Vet wrap**- Self-sticking bandage can be used to secure bandages or braces.
- **Cotton Balls**-Use for cleaning wounds.
- **Q-tips**—Use for cleaning wounds and applying medications.
- **Tweezers**
- **Scissors**- Use to trim wool around a wound.
- **Disposable gloves**
- **Vetericyn Wound & skin care**-an antibacterial spray for scrapes and wounds.
- **Neosporin** without the pain relief. This can be used to treat most injuries initially. Clean with peroxide first.
- **Nail clippers**-good to have on hand to trim nails
- **Septic Powder** (blood stop)-Used to stop nails from bleeding if you accidentally cut too close, or if they happen to pull a nail.
- **Oral syringes**-If you rabbit stops eating or drinking, you will



need these to administer food and water to prevent GI Stasis. Have 1cc size for medications and 35cc for feeding.

- **Oxbow Critical Care**-This supplement is useful to syringe feed your rabbit if they stop eating. The flavor is tasty and it will give them the nutrients they need.
- **Baby Food**- Another trick to get them to eat is to water down some baby food and feed it through a syringe. Make sure to use organic without any additives. Pumpkin and squash are recommended. Canned pumpkin with no additives can also be used watered down.

Emergencies can happen at any time and you want to make sure you are prepared to avoid problems.

- **Immunize by Oxy-Gen**- supplement that I have used with rabbits that have gone off feed. I use the paste and pellets. I swear by this stuff.
- **A&D ointment** or **bag balm**- Can be used to treat sore hocks.
- **Simethicone drops** (baby gas medicine)-GI Stasis can be caused by gas build up (bloat) in the stomach that prevents your rabbit from eating. You can give your rabbit 1-2cc of infant gas medicine every hour to try and relieve the build up.
- **Papaya Tablets**- Can be given to prevent wool block.
- **Rectal Thermometer**- good to be able to take their temperature. Keep a little Vaseline on hand to lubricate the thermometer.

- **Heating pad or hot water bottle**- can be used to help warm up a rabbit that becomes too cold. Place the hot water bottle on the outside of a towel and not directly against the rabbit's body. Also good for warming up chilled kits.
- **Towel**- can be used to restrain a rabbit which will stop them from scratching and struggling while you force feed, give shot, clip nails, check teeth etc.
- **Disposable Scalpels**- used to open abscessed.
- **Electrolyte powder**- (Bounce back and Acid pack) can be added to their drinking water for stress (really good in hot weather) Can also use Pedialyte 3 cc every 4 to 6 hours as needed.
- **Kaopectate**- This anti diarrheal agent can be given two to three times a day (1/2 to 1/2 teaspoon) for sudden acute diarrhea.
- **Mineral Oil**- For the treatment of ear mites and skin irritations or wool block.
- **Neomycin Ophthalmic**- this is very good and should be kept in all rabbitries. This works great for nest box eye. Apply two to three times a day
- **Preparation H**- can be used to treat sore hocks. Apply daily for five to seven days.
- **Probios**- Administer to rabbits who are not eating. Helps to restore balance in an upset stomach. Also use if you have to administer penicillin. 1tsp per 6cc of water orally syringed 3-6 times daily.
- **Rubbing Alcohol**- for sterilizing scissors, tweezers or other tools
- **Saline**- for gentle wash around the eye area. (small contact solution)



- **Super glue-** to put a tear or cut back together.
- **Tincture of Iodine solution-** used to wipe over abscesses before lanced or wounds.
- **Peroxide-** used for wound care, fly strike and cleaning preening glands. The preening glands are found on both sides of the genitals on both bucks and does. A musk oil is emitted from these glands, and if rabbits do not clean themselves well the oil becomes rancid with a putrid odor. Dipping a q-tip in peroxide then cleaning the gland will keep them smelling fresh.
- **Meat tenderizer-** ½ teaspoon added to drinking water will help with wool block. The bromelain in the tenderizer will dissolve the block more effectively than pineapple.

Emergencies can happen at any time and you want to make sure you are prepared to avoid problems. Many of the items that you should include in your Rabbit First Aid Kit can be found around the house. Learn to recognize rabbit diseases and treat at the first sign of illness, should it become necessary. Isolate ALL new arrivals for two to four weeks. Water and feed them after the rest of the herd has been cared for. Beware of lending or borrowing rabbits for breeding. This is a good way to bring disease into your herd.

Below is a list of medications we also keep on hand.

Pen G- Antibiotic 0.1cc per pound Treatment varies for condition being treated.

● **Vent-** 0.1cc per pound inject once skip 3 days, treat, skip 3 days, treat for a total of 3 injections

Wazine liquid wormer- (piperazine) 1 fluid oz per gallon of water or 1/8 tsp per 5lb rabbit. We purchased it already mixed from a cage dealer in a spray bottle and spray on the backs of rabbits. They lick off when they clean themselves.

Toltrazuril- is a coccidiostat. 2 days on 5 days off 2 days on for treatment. A 3lb rabbit would get .4cc of toltrazuril 5% Do not give to pregnant does or kits under 8 weeks.

Terramycin ointment treats eye infections. Apply 2-3 times a day.

Colloidal Silver- safe topical antibiotic

Calcium Drench or tums- helps replace calcium lost during birthing and induces labor, can help pass retained or mummified kits. 1-3cc per day as needed. (liquid for goats)

Ivomec (Ivermectin) eradication of most internal and external parasites.

● **Fur mites-**1% injectable 1 drop per pound of rabbit orally or injected. Repeat in one week

● **Worms-**1% 1 drop per pound orally

Oxytocin- labor inducer. I do not keep on hand as my vet is just up the road and I can call and pick up a few syringes if needed.

Panacur- eradication of internal worms or used to treat wry neck.

● **Wry neck** .01cc per pound for 28 days

Lactated Ringer- rehydrates rabbits that have severe diarrhea or wool block or in shock. 50-100cc can be injected under the skin per 24 hours. Do not inject into muscle or vein.

PLEASE NOTE -Many states require a veterinary prescription to have access to some medications listed above.

