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 **pets**

How to help a stray dog



PIC: THINKSTOCK

Most people, pet parents or not, empathise with the strays on the roads. It is heart breaking to see an animal abandoned, in pain/ill, without anyone to help. Most people would possibly like to... but don't know how to go about it. It is not always possible to get a home for a stray but there are a number of ways in which we can ease their pain.

Once you build trust and establish contact, make sure to move him/her in a safe place. Hurt and abandoned dogs are easily attacked by other dogs. Move the stray away from the road and traffic – distressed animals often panic and run loose on the road, which can be life-threatening.

LOST DOGS

Most people decide to get lost dogs home without putting enough effort into finding their owner. The same thing happens in cases of stray puppies. People get them home without searching for the parents of the puppy. Says Abhinav Srihan, Fauna Police, "Also, in most of these cases people keep these dogs at home for some time and then give them to shelters. In Indian shelters, only 5-10 per cent dogs survive. So, shelter should be the last resort. Most shelters are overpopulated and the chances of a healthy dog catching infections is very high too."

The wisest decision is to look for the owner, and if not found, to look for a family that can commit to taking care of the dog forever.

ACCIDENT CASES

Animal accident cases are the most disheartening to the witness. You should immediately take the animal to the closest veterinarian or get in touch an animal NGO. Animal activist Divya Puri says, "NGOs and vets don't always have access to ambulances. You might need to take the dog to the vet or hospital yourself."

Once the dog gets medical aid and recovers, it is advisable to leave the dog in the same area he/she was picked from."

— Swati Tandon, pet expert

SAFETY

The first thing to keep in mind is your own safety. A dog which is hurt, ill or abandoned, is very anxious and scared. In this vulnerable state, he/she will not trust easily. It may attack out of fear or pain. Before you approach, give the animal enough time to trust you. Be careful in touching or picking up the dog as it might be in pain and can



Are you a proud pet parent? Have a cute cat story to share? Maybe your guinea pig is giving you trouble? Whatever is your creature companion, we are here to listen to you. Mention your full name and your city, and send your photos, queries and stories to timeslife@timesgroup.com

