



EMERGENCY CARE
For Puppies and Kittens

A Guide to

Saving Little Lives

Baby animals need special care

The emergency kit provides Esbilac® milk replacer for puppies, or KMR® milk replacer for kittens.

If this is your first experience caring for an orphaned animal, you should contact your veterinarian so that an examination can be made for injury, disease, estimate of age and general condition.



Which products to use

Use Esbilac® or Goats Milk Esbilac® for puppies and KMR® for kittens.

KMR, Esbilac and Goats Milk Esbilac (GME) may be suitable for other species with similar requirements such as domestic rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters and ferrets. Please check with your veterinarian for suitability.



If you're working with orphaned wildlife it is especially important to contact a member of the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association (NWRA) or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator in your area. Most states have laws governing the care of wildlife, and there are a number of potential health hazards that exist. Licensed professionals can help establish if the animal really is an orphan, what its emergency needs are, what precautions should be taken and where you can transport the animal for the care it needs. Call a member of the NWRA, or our number on the back panel. We have a list of wildlife professionals nationwide.

KMR, Esbilac and GME have also been used successfully by wildlife professionals.

Making the baby feel at home

An appropriately sized incubator box should be prepared for the orphan. The bottom should be lined with soft, clean rags or newspaper. Heat may be provided by a heating pad on “low” placed under the box or covered tightly with a soft, smooth cloth to prevent the animal from crawling under it. The heating pad should be positioned so that it does not cover the entire bottom surface. This will allow the orphan to seek a cooler or warmer temperature as desired.



The Temperature is Important and Should Be Checked at the Level of the Animal

Orphans less than one week of age should be kept at a temperature of about 90 degrees F. This can be dropped about five degrees each week until room temperature is reached by the fourth week. Usually kittens require warmer temperatures than puppies, and smaller animals require warmer temperatures than larger animals.

A Heated Environment Will Require Added Moisture

50% relative humidity is satisfactory for a heated environment. A humidifier in the room or one or two pans of water placed close to the orphan's box will help meet this goal.

It is important to avoid drafts on the orphan yet still provide ventilation. Place a ventilated cover over the box to control drafts.

Determine the Correct Feeding Level

It is always easier to raise an orphan if it has been able to nurse from the natural mother for the first 24 to 48 hours. The colostrum milk it receives will provide some natural protection against disease.

The weight of the orphan is needed to determine a correct feeding level. Subsequent weigh-ins every second or third day will be a guide to progress in achieving growth. The orphan may lose a little weight during the first couple of days, until it adjusts to the formula. If there are no diseases or intestinal upsets, the orphan should subsequently grow at an increasing rate as milk consumption increases.

Amounts to Feed



A feeding rate of 2 tablespoons of liquid or reconstituted powder for each 4 ounces (1/4 lb. or 113 grams) of body weight during each 24-hour period will work with most species. This quantity should be divided equally

among three or four feedings per day. Very small animals weighing only 1 or 2 ounces which need only 1/2 or 1 tablespoon of milk per day, or orphans which are very weak, may do better if the total quantity of milk to be fed is divided in very small feedings, as many as six times per day.

We recommend that orphans be slightly underfed for the first two to three feedings, to allow them to adapt to the Esbilac[®], Goats Milk Esbilac[®] or KMR[®] formulas.

After full feeding has been established for three to four days and there are no apparent digestive problems, the feeding level can be slowly increased. Bottled orphans will often reject the bottle when they are full. Do not overfeed.

As you slowly increase the amount of milk replacer being offered, the orphan should consume all or nearly all of the milk at each feeding.

Using a Nurser Bottle

The PetAg 2 oz. Nurser works well with kittens.

The 4 oz. size is appropriate for puppies.

If the orphans are extremely small or weak and cannot nurse from even the 2 oz. bottle, the milk may have to be delivered orally with an eyedropper or feeding syringe.



Positioning the Animal for Feeding

Most people experienced in feeding orphans prefer to hold the animal during bottle feeding. The orphan's head should be tilted up and outstretched slightly while the animal is laying on its stomach. The bottle nipple is placed in the orphan's mouth and is pulled up and away slightly; this will elevate the head and encourage vigorous sucking. If milk comes out the orphan's nose during nursing, the hole in the nipple is too large and milk is being delivered too fast. Aspiration may occur.



After Feeding

Clean, soft, smooth cloths should be available to replace soiled bedding and to rub the animal to stimulate circulation and bowels. Young orphans will usually require some help to urinate and to have a bowel movement. Gently rub the genital and anal areas after feeding. A warm, moist cloth works best for this.

The orphan may need to be burped after feeding to relieve any gas formation.

All bottles, nipples, and other utensils used in feeding should be thoroughly washed with hot, soapy water after each use. Rinse well to remove any soap residue.

When to Use PetAg's Bene-Bac® Pet Gel

If, as you increase the amount being fed, the orphan experiences excessive diarrhea, return to the previous lower level of feeding for several feedings before trying to increase the level again. Since diarrhea can upset bacterial balance in an animal's system, PetAg's **Bene-Bac®** Pet Gel may be used as a source to replace naturally occurring microorganisms.

If problems persist, a veterinarian should be consulted.



Look, He's Growing!

When the orphan is on its feet, eyes open, and increasing in body weight, consideration should be given to getting the orphan to lap its milk. Dip your finger into the bowl and let the orphan lick it as you gently guide his head toward the bowl. You'll want to be patient and not push the orphan's head into the bowl. This could frighten the orphan and could cause it to become ill.



After Lapping Has Been Learned

At this time, PetAg's **Esbilac® 2nd Step™** Puppy Weaning Food or **KMR® 2nd Step™** Kitten Weaning Food can be mixed into the milk replacer. Start with a thin gruel and slowly increase the amount of weaning food over several days making a somewhat thicker gruel each day.

Making the Transition to Solid Food

Orphaned puppies and kittens can be changed to commercial food by the time they are five weeks old for puppies and six weeks for kittens. Always provide plenty of fresh, clean water to drink.

Need Additional Food?



As the baby animal grows, you may need additional food before it reaches weaning age. You can continue to feed it Emergency Packs, or if the animal or animals consume larger quantities, you may wish to purchase larger sizes of Esbilac®, Goats Milk Esbilac® or KMR®. Both liquid and powder formulations will provide the nutrients your growing animal needs.

Of Special Note: Wild animals are not pets, and it is not our intention to suggest that wild animals be kept as pets. For your safety, and that of the animal, contact a member of the National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association or a licensed wildlife rehabilitator in your area. These professionals can prepare baby wild animals for successful release to their natural environment.



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Call our Technical Service line if you have additional questions.
1-800-323-0877 8 am to 5 pm EST.
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