



The RECOVER Initiative Releases Newborn Resuscitation Guidelines for Puppies and Kittens

[North Grafton, MA – August 25, 2025] –

The RECOVER Initiative is excited to announce the release of its Newborn Resuscitation Guidelines, a first-of-its-kind resource offering evidence- and consensus-based recommendations to help veterinary teams support puppies and kittens immediately after birth, when every second counts.

“These Guidelines are the product of years of exhaustive literature search, analysis, synthesis, and consensus, made possible through the collaboration of more than 60 veterinary professionals and subject matter experts.”, says Dr. Manuel Boller, Research Co-Chair of RECOVER.

Bridging a Critical Gap in Veterinary Neonatal Care

“There is evidence that more than 10% of puppies born after difficult labor, or simply even born by Cesarean section, do not survive the first 24 hours after birth,” explains Dr. Jamie Burkitt, Guidelines Co-Chair of RECOVER. “With these Guidelines, we aim to provide veterinary teams with evidence- and consensus-based practices with the goal of optimally supporting newborn puppies or kittens during this fragile period.”

Until now, there have been no evidence-based guidelines or clear consensus regarding best practices to support newborn puppies and kittens as they make the challenging transition from intra- to extra-uterine life. The RECOVER Newborn Resuscitation Guidelines fill that gap by providing structured, scientifically-informed recommendations for the first hour after birth, often the most vulnerable time for neonatal patients.

Guiding Veterinary Teams Through the First Hour After Birth

The Newborn Resuscitation Guidelines focus on a range of supportive measures, emphasizing immediate and gentle interventions, such as airway clearing, tactile stimulation, and assisted ventilation, to help newborns establish effective breathing patterns. For the most severely affected patients, those who are not breathing and have no detectable heartbeat, the Guidelines

offer clear direction on more advanced measures such as initiation of chest compressions and administration of life-saving drugs alongside artificial respiration. A newborn resuscitation algorithm and a drug dosing chart are also included within the Guidelines and are designed to serve as cognitive aids to help rescuers who are navigating real-time clinical decisions during neonatal emergencies.

“Resuscitation of newborn puppies and kittens varies in many aspects from CPR in adult dogs or cats,” says Dr. Boller. “During normal birth, mothers provide vital care such as stimulating breathing and clearing airways. But in cases where this doesn’t occur—or during Cesarean births—the responsibility falls to veterinary professionals. Our Guidelines are designed to help those teams step in quickly and effectively.”

A New Standard in Neonatal Veterinary Medicine

The release of the Newborn Resuscitation Guidelines marks another milestone in RECOVER’s mission to empower people to provide lifesaving care to animals through education, science, and community. By complementing the 2024 RECOVER CPR Guidelines for adult dogs and cats, these Newborn Guidelines reinforce RECOVER’s dedication to supporting veterinary teams in providing life-saving care to animals of all life stages.

The RECOVER Newborn Resuscitation Guidelines are available in an open-access issue of Wiley’s Journal of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care and on the RECOVER Initiative website, which can be accessed at <https://recoverinitiative.org/2024-guidelines/>.

About the RECOVER Initiative:

The RECOVER Initiative is a not-for-profit leader in evidence-based veterinary CPR guidelines and training. Since 2012, RECOVER has empowered veterinary professionals, pet professionals, and pet owners worldwide through education, science, and community. With a network of over 350 Certified Instructors, 25,500 Certified Rescuers, and 85,000 course learners, RECOVER sets global standards in veterinary lifesaving care. For more information and to access the newly translated CPR guidelines for adult dogs and cats, visit <https://recoverinitiative.org>.

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