



Do You Know...

what to do when you find a baby animal? As we move into spring/summer, wild babies will be arriving. You may come across a youngster that has fallen from its nest. Knowing what to do will help give that baby the best chance to survive and return to the wild.

If you find a baby mammal with its eyes closed or a baby bird with little or no feathering, that animal is in trouble! If you can see and reach a nest ~~more~~ less directly above the baby, check to see if there are other youngsters that look the same in the nest. If there are, simply place the baby back in the nest. Watch from a distance, like inside your house. The mom should return to the nest and continue her duties. Human scent will not cause the mother to abandon her young, either bird or mammal. Mom has a lot invested in her offspring; she may be a bit nervous when she finds her missing baby back in the nest but she will accept it back.

If you do not see a nest, give us a call. Different animals need to be handled differently. Some animals, such as rabbits and deer, are often thought to be orphaned/abandoned when, in fact, they are just fine. Baby raccoons may well be reclaimed by mom if she is given half a chance. Many young birds leave the nest before they can fly and spend several days hopping around on the ground and onto low bushes while the parents continue to find and feed them. Check with us to make sure you are rescuing, not kidnapping!



If you are sure the youngster needs help, the most important thing you can do is to provide heat. If you are dealing with a mammal, find a box with a lid, poke a few holes in the side for ventilation, and line it with newspaper. Place a soft cloth, (flannel

baby blanket, sweatshirt, T-shirt), in the bottom of the box and allow the baby to burrow between the layers of the cloth. Place the box on a heating pad set to low. Put the top on the box (some of these guys can move around more than you would think!), and call us for further instructions. If it is after hours, and you feel you must feed the little one, purchase a bottle of Pedialyte (a fluid replacement for human infants with diarrhea) and feed the baby with an eyedropper. There is a risk of getting the fluid into the lungs so feed very carefully. If fluid starts coming out the nose, stop immediately. The baby will do better with no liquid than with liquid down the wrong chute! Be sure to transfer the baby to a licensed

rehabilitator as soon as possible. Although very cute as babies, they grow up to be uncontrollable and potentially dangerous adults that cannot survive in the wild. Wild animals DO NOT make good pets and it is against State law.

Should you find a baby bird, the set-up is pretty much the same as for mammals. Use a small plastic margarine tub or berry basket as a nest. Line the nest with a paper towel and make a soft cushion of toilet paper or Kleenex. Put the baby in your nest, the nest in a box and the box on a heating pad set to low. Do not attempt to give water or other liquid with an eyedropper. The



opening to a bird's lungs is right behind its tongue; the perfect position for an eyedropper. If you get fluid into the bird's lungs, you may well be killing it instead of helping it! With baby birds, especially un-feathered babies, warmth is absolutely critical. These young creatures cannot regulate their body temperature; if it is 75 degrees outside, the bird's body temperature will drop to 75 degrees instead of a normal 102 to 104 degrees. If your body temperature dropped that much, you would be dead and so will the baby bird! Birds are so delicate that it is best to get them to a licensed rehabilitator immediately. Remember, birds do not eat at night even if they are very young. If you cannot transfer the bird right away and absolutely must feed it something, soak some dry cat or dog food in warm water until it is soft and spongy. When the baby begs, stick a small piece well back into its mouth. It should swallow easily. Do not attempt to force feed a baby that is not begging and do not even think about feeding it if it is cold. Successfully raising a baby bird is extremely labor intensive requiring feeding as often as every 20 minutes throughout the daylight hours. You cannot go grocery shopping, cruising the mall or watch a good movie if you are raising a baby bird. Birds grow very quickly usually taking no more than 4 to 6 weeks to become self-sufficient. That rapid growth rate requires excellent nutrition. If you have a life, you will not be able to raise a baby bird.

Here at Second Chance, we spend all day every day tending to the needs of our patients. This is our life! Although the temptation to care for one of these cute, dependent babies can be powerful, please consider the animal and get it to a licensed rehabilitator so it will have the best possible opportunity to get that second chance.

Now You Know!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Reprinted from "Second Thoughts" newsletter – Spring/Summer 2003.
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