

# TECHNIQUES FOR RESTRAINING DOGS

(Photos courtesy of KwaZulu-Natal Rabies Project and World Society for the Protection of Animals)

Restraint of the patient is very important, and needs to be conducted carefully and humanely to ensure the safety of the handlers, vaccinators and animals.

## **Small dogs:**

It is seldom possible to find a raised surface on which to put the dogs for vaccinations in a rural campaign and bending down has its drawbacks as the dog could have traction on the ground which will allow it to move. The best is for the owner to pick the dog up for vaccination as shown in the picture below. Dog is secure and cannot turn and bite the vaccinator.



1. Dog feels safe in owners arms.
2. Dog is secure.
3. Neck is exposed.
4. Dog cannot turn and bite vaccinator.
5. No traction so movement is limited.

## **Large dogs:**

A number of methods are shown below:



1. Not ideal but common.
2. Can work with calm dogs.
3. Often dogs react to being touched by someone they cannot see.



1. Dog should be made feel secure.
2. Pull dog against body.
3. Hold head firmly but not restrictively.
4. Neck is exposed.
5. Dog cannot turn and bite.



### **Straddling the dog**

1. Normal scruff vaccination site can be obscured by person's leg, so best to use back leg vaccination site if using this form of restraint.



### **Using a leash as a muzzle**

1. Leash 1<sup>st</sup> placed around neck as per normal.
2. Wrap end of leash around muzzle once or twice, while holding with other hand at neck.
3. Bring back around the back of neck and hold.



### **Control poles**

1. Useful tool which, in the right hands, can safely hold difficult dogs for vaccinating.
2. Needs to be used correctly as can be harmful to the dog (training required).
3. Not suitable for dogs that have not experienced being restrained by a collar and lead before as the dog is likely to respond very badly to this novel and apparently dangerous method of restraint. Nets are more suitable for this type of naïve dog.





## Nets

1. Very useful tool for dogs that cannot be held by an owner or handler, especially useful when working with dog populations that are rarely collared or walked on leashes.
2. Requires some skill to initially catch the dog and care needs to be taken not to hit dog with the metal handle or loop.
3. Once the dog is inside the net it is lifted and twisted so the dog is held firmly in the bottom portion of the net, the dog can then be safely vaccinated through the net.
4. Safe for handlers and vaccinators, although area should be cleared of bystanders while dog is released as they will be stressed by the experience and may potentially bite whilst trying to escape the area.
5. Also very good for euthanasia of difficult dogs as sedatives can be administered IM through the net and a leg can be pulled through a net fenestration for intravenous injection of sodium pentobarbitone.
6. Nets do require relatively frequent repair.