

Safety Spotlight

Dog Bites: Preventative Measures and Post-Bite Care

Dog bites can cause pain and injury, but they can also spread germs that cause infection. Nearly 1 in 5 people bitten by a dog requires medical attention. Although the idea of being bitten by a dog can be scary, it doesn't mean you need to avoid dogs completely. If you or your employees work around dogs, be aware of the risks and learn how to enjoy being around dogs without getting bitten.

How to Prevent Dog Bites

Do's:

- Always ask if it is okay to pet someone else's dog before reaching out to pet the dog.
- When approached by an unfamiliar dog, remain motionless ("be still like a tree").
- If a dog knocks you over, curl into a ball with your head tucked and your hands over your ears and neck.
- Immediately let an adult know about any stray dogs or dogs that are behaving strangely.

Don'ts:

- Approach unfamiliar dogs.
- Run from a dog.
- Panic or make loud noises.
- Disturb a dog that is sleeping, eating, or caring for puppies.
- Pet a dog without allowing it to see and sniff you first.
- Encourage your dog to play aggressively.
- Let small children play with a dog unsupervised.

What to Do If an Unfamiliar Dog Approaches & You Do Not Want to Interact with it:

- Stop! Stay still and be calm.
- Do not panic or make loud noises.
- Avoid direct eye contact with the dog.
- Say "No" or "Go Home" in a firm, deep voice.
- Facing a dog directly can appear aggressive to the dog. Instead, keep your body turned partially or completely to the side.
- Slowly raise your hands to your neck, with your elbows in.
- Wait for the dog to pass or slowly back away.

¹ "CDC Features." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 9 Apr. 2018, www.cdc.gov/features/dog-bite-prevention/index.html.



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What to Do If You are Bitten or Attacked by a Dog:

Protect Yourself

- Put your purse, bag, or jacket between you and the dog.
- If you are knocked down, curl into a ball with your head tucked in and your hands over your ears and neck.

Wound Care

- For minor wounds:
 - » Wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water.
 - » Apply an antibiotic cream.
 - » Cover the wound with a clean bandage.
- For deep wounds:
 - » Apply pressure with a clean, dry cloth to stop the bleeding.
 - » If you cannot stop the bleeding or you feel faint or weak, call 911 or your local emergency medical services immediately.
 - » See a healthcare provider as soon as possible.
- See a healthcare provider:
 - » If the wound is serious (uncontrolled bleeding, loss of function, extreme pain, muscle or bone exposure, etc.).
 - » If the wound becomes red, painful, warm, or swollen, or if you develop a fever.
 - » If you don't know whether or not the dog has been vaccinated against rabies.
 - » If it has been more than 5 years since your last tetanus shot and the bite is deep.

Report the Bite

- Since anyone who is bitten by a dog is at risk of getting rabies, consider contacting your local animal control agency or police department to report the incident, especially:
 - » If you don't know whether the dog has been vaccinated against rabies.
 - » If the dog appears sick or is acting strangely.
- If possible, contact the owner and ensure the animal has a current rabies vaccination. You will need the rabies license number, name of the veterinarian who administered the vaccine, and the owner's name, address, and phone number.



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