



Stay Dog Bite Free!

Millions of American's share their homes with dogs. The majority of interactions between people and dogs are happy and problem free. For others, these interactions are less positive. Each year, about 4.7 million people in the United States are bitten by dogs. Every 40 seconds someone in the United States seeks medical attention for a dog bite-related injury. Fortunately, most dog bites can be prevented. Follow these tips to keep your family dog bite free.

Prevent

- Before petting a dog, ask the owner's permission.
- Never go onto someone else's property or approach a strange animal to pet him.
- Never sneak up on or pet a dog who is eating or sleeping. Animals may bite when they are startled or frightened.
- Don't chase, poke, hit, pull, pinch or tease a dog.
- Never pet a dog who is playing with a toy or caring for puppies.
- Don't make quick movements, run or scream around dogs.
- Never tease a dog into growling, barking, lunging, or otherwise acting aggressively.

Recognize

Understanding a dog's body language can help you avoid being bitten. When a dog is angry or fearful, he is likely to bite, and should never be approached.

- An angry dog may try to make himself look big: ears standing up, the fur on his back standing on end, and tail straight up (it may be wagging). The dog may bare his teeth and growl, and stare straight at whoever is approaching.
- A frightened dog may shrink to the ground, put his tail between his legs, and fold his ears back.

React

If a dog approaches, follow these tips:

- If walking, stop and stand still (like a tree) with your hands at your side.
- If on the ground, lie still (like a log) with legs together, fold fists over the back of the neck with forearms covering the ears.
- Never stare a dog in the eyes or turn around and run.
- If attacked, give the dog an object, such as a jacket or backpack to bite or chew on.

