

DOG BITE prevention

Nearly 5 million people in the United States are bitten by dogs every year. Unfortunately, children are the most common victims, with bites often occurring during everyday activities with familiar dogs. There are 72 million good dogs in the United States, but any dog can bite if it is frightened or feels threatened—even the family pet. There are a number of simple things that can be done to prevent dog bites.



1 Be a responsible dog owner.

- **Choose your pet carefully** and properly socialize it as a puppy so it is comfortable around people and other animals.
- **Train your dog** so it understands your rules. Build a bond so you and your dog trust each other, and avoid putting it in a position where it can be teased or feel threatened.
- **Exercise with your dog and walk it often** so it gets a healthy dose of mental stimulation. Avoid rough games that might encourage biting, like wrestling and tug-of-war.
- **See your family veterinarian regularly** to keep your pet healthy. How your dog feels physically can affect how it behaves. Neuter your pet and have it vaccinated against rabies and other preventable infectious diseases. Parasite control and other care are important for a healthy, happy pet.
- **Use a leash in public** so you are always in control of your dog. If you have a fenced-in yard, always check to make sure the gate is closed and the fence secure so your dog cannot escape.

2 Protect your family.

- **Treat your dog** with respect.
- **Be careful** around unfamiliar dogs and keep an eye out for situations that might be dangerous.
- **Always supervise young children** around dogs, and never leave a baby alone with a dog.
- **Teach children** not to approach strange dogs and to always ask permission from a dog's owner before petting it.

IN THE EVENT OF A DOG BITE:

- **Request proof of rabies vaccination** and the owner's name and contact information.
- **Clean the wound** with soap and water and seek medical attention immediately.
- **Call the dog's veterinarian** to make sure it is up to date on vaccinations.