



## Scratch and Bite Care

If you or a child are scratched or bitten by a dog, you should always do the following:

- Immediately wash wounds with warm soapy water.
- Seek medical attention to ensure proper care is given to the wound and to protect yourself and family.
- Due to the potential risk of rabies that dog bites may pose, it is important that the person who was bitten seek immediate medical care from their medical provider. If your pet is bitten, they will need prompt medical attention as well, please take them to their veterinarian for care.
- If you or a family member is bitten, you should notify the proper authorities, such as Animal Control or local law enforcement, so they may locate the animal and verify vaccination status and health of the animal.



Please **schedule** an **appointment** with your veterinarian to discuss any questions or concerns!

## References:

<https://www.avma.org/public/Pages/Dog-Bite-Prevention.aspx>

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/pets/dogs.html#preventing-bites>



<http://phc.amedd.army.mil>  
1-800-222-9698

APHC Animal Health

This information brochure was written by Army Veterinary Services personnel and published by the Army Public Health Center to inform and educate Service members, beneficiaries, and retirees about Animal Health. Comments or questions regarding content can be directed to [ARMY-VSPublications@mail.mil](mailto:ARMY-VSPublications@mail.mil). Locate your local Veterinary Treatment Facility at <https://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/animed/vtfo/Pages/Veterinary-Treatment-Facility-Interactive-Map.aspx>.

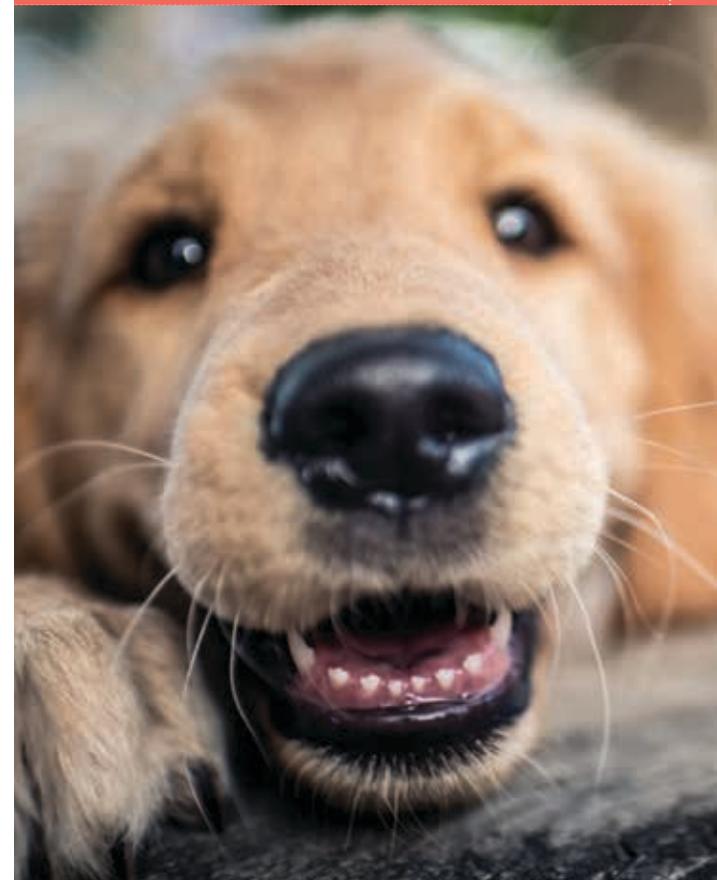


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TA-358-0418



Pet Safety

# Dog Bite prevention

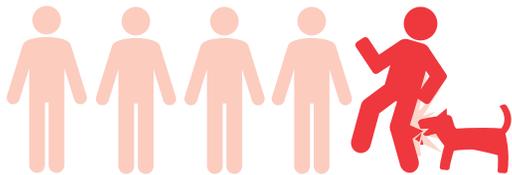


Tips for avoiding and treating dog bites  
Your Veterinary Treatment Facility can help!



Dogs make great, loving, and loyal family members! While most dogs are friendly, it's important to know that even the kindest and most patient dogs can bite given the right circumstances. You can reduce the risk of dog bites for yourself and your children by following common sense prevention measures. Remember, if you are bitten, seek medical attention right away.

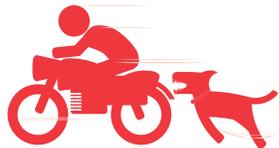
## Dog Bites by the Numbers



Almost 1 in 5 people bitten by dogs require some sort of medical treatment.



Most **bites** occur during normal and routine daily activities.



## Bite Prevention Tips

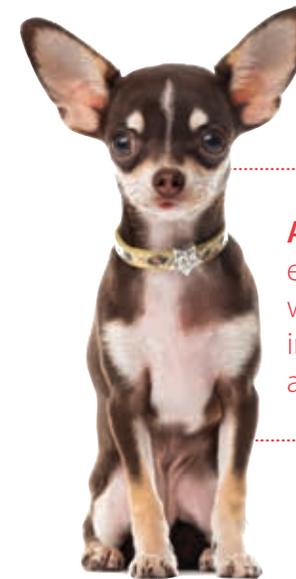
- Always ask the owner before you pet their dog. Allow the dog to approach and sniff you. If the dog appears friendly and the owner gives you permission, you may pet the dog lightly (not heavy patting or thumping). Start at the back or shoulders, as most dogs do not like to be patted on top of the head.
- When interacting with a dog, do not stare directly into the eyes. Do not hover over them, and be sure to give them space to move and back away if they do not want to be petted anymore. It is best to stand slightly to the side and bend down so you are more on their level. Do not hug or squeeze the dog. Back away calmly when done petting.
- Never approach an unattended dog. Do not reach over a fence or through a car window to pet a dog.
- Do not disturb dogs while they are sleeping or eating. It's difficult to guess how a dog may react when he/she is startled or eating.
- Avoid dogs guarding their toys or taking care of puppies.
- Do not enter any yard, building, or enclosed area to pet a dog.
- Never leave infants or young children unattended with ANY dog.
- If you are alone and an unattended/unfamiliar dog approaches you, whether friendly or not, immediately "**Be a Tree.**" This means—Stop! Do not run! Fold your arms across your chest and look at your feet. Do not yell! Do not strike at the dog! Do not look the dog in the eyes. Do not make any sudden movements. By "Being a Tree," the dog will think you are uninteresting and move on. Stay in this position until the dog leaves or someone comes to help.
- If a strange dog knocks you down, immediately roll into a ball or lie as flat as you can on your stomach on the ground. Cover your ears with your hands and protect your face. Keep an object, such as your coat or book bag, between you and the dog. Lie quiet and still until the dog leaves.

## Tips for Children

Talk to your children about safe interactions with dogs, and make sure they follow the tips above when meeting new dogs or interacting with their own pets. It is very important to teach children polite behavior around dogs. Always set a good example for your child when it comes to interacting with dogs and other animals!

Below are some additional items that all kids should know:

- Tell the nearest adult if you see a strange dog or one that seems to be sick or not acting normally.
- Tell your parents or another adult if a dog tries to bite you.
- If you are scratched or bitten, immediately tell your parents or the nearest adult so they can get help.



**Always** set a good example for your child when it comes to interacting with dogs and other animals!