



summer safety

Dog Bites

Who's at risk?

Every year, 4.7 million Americans are bitten by dogs—60% of these victims are children.

Dog Bite Facts

- Almost half of typical dog bite victims are children younger than 14 years of age.
- Injury rates are highest for children ages 5–9, especially boys.
- Each year, nearly 800,000 dog bites require medical attention. Of these, approximately 386,000 people require treatment in an emergency department.
- Un-neutered dogs are 2.6 times more likely to bite than neutered dogs. Male dogs are 6.2 times more likely to bite than female dogs.

Dog Bite Prevention Tips

- Teach children basic safety around dogs and review regularly.
- Do not approach an unfamiliar dog.
- Ask the owner's permission before allowing a child to pet a dog. Always approach slowly and quietly, and allow the dog to sniff the back of your hand. Pet the dog's sides or back gently.
- Do not play with a dog unless supervised by an adult.
- Do not disturb a dog that is sleeping, eating, or caring for puppies.
- If a dog growls or chases you, be still and quiet. Stand with your hands at your sides (like a tree). If you are playing on the ground, lie down with your knees into your stomach and hands over your ears (like a rock). The dog will most likely sniff you and go away. Use backpacks or bikes as shields.
- Avoid direct eye contact with a dog. This is often viewed by dogs as a threat.
- Wait until your child is 4 years old to get a dog. Younger children are more likely to be bitten.
- Neuter your dog, especially male dogs.
- If bitten, immediately report the bite to an adult.

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Brought to you by Trauma Services of Saint Joseph's Hospital

For information on injury prevention programs, contact Amy Schmidt, Injury Prevention Coordinator, at 715.387.9566.

Sources: Safety tips adapted from the Emergency Nurses Association Injury Prevention Institute and the Humane Society of the United States.