

REDUCING ANIMAL BITES

Animals provide numerous benefits to humans, and interaction with them can enhance both physical and psychological health. However, such interactions are not always benign or without adverse consequence. When threatened, many animals will bite as a defensive behavior. An animal may bite in response to fear or pain, in an attempt to assert dominance, or to protect its territory, food, and offspring.

Warning signs

Anyone who sees an animal exhibiting the following behaviors should move to a safe distance:

- Pulled back head and/or ears
- Tense body
- Stiff tail
- Wrinkled brow
- Rolled eyes so the whites show
- Flicking tongue
- Intense stare
- Backing away

Critical tips to help avoid animal attacks:

- Never run
- Use your packages as a barrier
- Back away
- Take off your hat or vest and shake it in front of you to create a temporary distraction
- Use loud commands and shout for help from others in the area
- Consider carrying animal repellent

7 steps to treating an animal bite

1. Wash the wound. Use mild soap and run warm tap water over it for five to 10 minutes.
2. Slow the bleeding with a clean cloth.
3. Apply over-the-counter antibiotic cream if you have it.
4. Wrap the wound in a sterile bandage.
5. Keep the wound bandaged and **see your doctor**.
6. Change the bandage several times a day once your doctor has examined the wound.
7. Watch for signs of infection, including redness, swelling, increased pain and fever.

After any bite, you should make sure you know when your last tetanus shot was — and that you're up-to-date. While a tetanus immunization is good for 10 years, your doctor may recommend a booster if the wound is dirty and it's been more than five years since your last shot.

For more information, please visit dspinsurancepolicy.com



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