

Animal Bites

by Larry and Penny Dewey, Health and Welfare Committee (as published in the Pinscher Patter, Dec 1997)

Any bite can be potentially dangerous. Animal saliva has bacteria. It is always a good idea to see your vet when your dog is bitten. Some things you can do, after seeing your vet, to keep wounds under control are:

1. Muzzle the dog. It is natural for the animal in pain to lash out. Be careful not to obstruct the breathing.
2. Trimming hair around the bite makes it easier to clean. Before you trim, some Vets recommend smearing on a thin layer of water-soluble jelly. The jelly will trap the cut hair and can be washed away.
3. Keep area clean by flushing with lukewarm water for at least five minutes. If the bite is at least 24 hours old, wash with antibacterial soap such as Betadine skin cleaner, then flush.
4. After washing and drying the bite, apply over the counter triple antibiotic ointment such as Neosporin. Bandage if possible and keep the bandages loose. This is to keep the animal from licking. Once the bandage is removed, it is natural for the animal to lick the wound. This may help speed up the healing process by keeping the wound clean.
5. If the animal licks too much, it may be necessary to fit it with an "Elizabethan" collar. They can be purchased at a pet store, or made out of a plastic bucket.

You should see your Vet when any of these danger signs appear:

1. Severe pain - If wound is infected, the animal will jerk away when you touch the affected area.
2. Severe blood loss, including external or internal loss - Press a finger against the gums. If they don't turn pink after momentary whiteness, there could be a large amount of blood loss.
3. Bites to the abdomen or throat can cause damage to the windpipe or internal bleeding.
4. Any bite from a wild animal - You should take your dog to the Vet right away. To be safe, you assume the animal was rabid. Be sure you keep your animals' vaccinations current.

Miniature Pinscher Club of America, Inc.