

TAKING THE BITE OUT OF YOUR DOG
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I am sure that many people purchased a dog this holiday season. It is now time to look at ways to keep your family safe from dog bites. According to the CDC 4.5 million Americans are bitten by dogs each year, and 1 in 5 bites result in injuries that require medical attention.

Who is at the most risk of being bitten by a dog?

- 1. Children, although dog bite injuries among children seem to be decreasing the highest percentage of injuries requiring medical attention occur in those aged 5 - 9.**
- 2. Adult males are more likely than females to be bitten.**
- 3. People with dogs in their home. Adults with 2 or more dogs in their home are 5 times more likely to be bitten than those without dogs.**

How should you decrease the risk of your dog biting someone?

- 1. Spay/neuter your dog, as this decreases aggression.**
- 2. Never leave a baby or small child alone with a dog.**
- 3. Don't play aggressive games with a dog.**
- 4. Teach your dog submissive behaviors such as rolling over to expose their belly and to give up food without growling.**
- 5. Immediately speak to your vet if the dog develops aggressive or undesirable behaviors.**

What are safety tips you should teach your child?

- 1. Never approach a strange dog. Ask permission from a dog's owner before petting a dog.**
- 2. Do not run from a dog or scream.**
- 3. Remain motionless when approached by a strange dog, be still like a tree.**
- 4. If knocked down by a dog, curl into a ball and lie still, with your hands over your head and neck. Protect your face.**
- 5. Do not play with a dog unless you are supervised by an adult.**
- 6. Report strange dogs to an adult.**
- 7. Avoid direct eye contact with a dog.**
- 8. Do not bother a dog that is caring for puppies, sleeping or eating.**
- 9. Do not pet a dog without allowing it to see and sniff you first.**
- 10. Immediately tell an adult if you are bitten by a dog.**

The CDC website at www.cdc.gov was used as a resource for the writing of this article.