

Pets & Home Visits: Bites, Rabies & Pet Info

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Pet Ownership

- United States households:
 - 37% own dogs
 - 32% own cats
 - 4.5% own birds
- Los Angeles County adults
 - 40.4% have a pet
 - 27% own dogs
 - 14.5% own cats
- Do you own a pet?



Potential Risks associated with Pets

- Bites & other injuries
- Zoonoses:
 - Bacterial
 - Viral
 - Fungal
 - Parasitic
- Allergies



Potential Benefits of Having a Pet

- Companionship
- Protection
- Assistance
- Improved Health
- Exercise
- Children learning responsibility



Animal Bites

- Estimated 2% of people get bit every year
- 80% of bites involve dogs
 - 4.5 million dog bites in USA each year
- 1 in 5 require medical attention
- Have you been bitten?



Source: Minnesota VMA

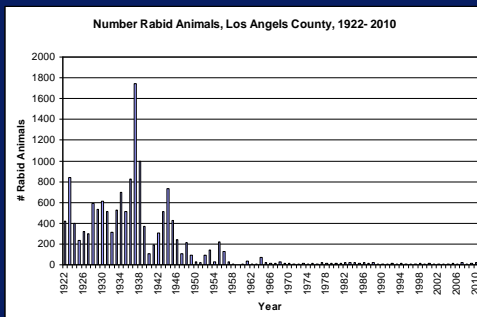


After a bite, What happens?

- What should the bite victim do?
- Do they need to go to the doctor?
- Do they have to worry about rabies?
- Does it need to be reported?
- Is so, by who?



Local Rabies Risk



In Los Angeles County, which animal is the ***MOST*** likely to carry rabies?

- Coyote
- Squirrel
- Rat
- Bat



In Los Angeles County, which animal is the *LEAST* likely to carry rabies?

- A. Skunk
- B. Squirrel
- C. Raccoon
- D. Bat



Los Angeles County Dept of Public Health
Veterinary Public Health & Rabies Control
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/vph/>



Even if Rabies is not a Major Risk, How can I Protect Myself from Bites?



Home Visit Bite Prevention Tips

- You may be entering dog territory
- If you can, call first
 - Ask if they have a dog
 - Ask for it to be locked up
- If you can not call first:
 - Look around before approaching the home
 - Is the front yard fenced?
 - Is there a “Beware of Dog” sign



Home Visit Bite Prevention Tips

- Keep your eyes open
- Tap on the fence near the front gate
- Keep a clipboard, purse or jacket handy
- When at the door, look around, listen



Do you know dog language?

- Learning about dog body language and facial expressions can help you decide if a dog is safe to pet
- Bites often occur because the dog senses a threat



Dog Language: Happy

- Mouth open
- Panting
- Ears forward

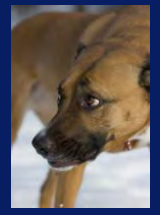


Source: Minnesota VMA



Dog Language: Scared

- Fish eye (white of eye showing)
- Worried expression
- Ears back
- Covering or hiding
- Tail may be tucked
- Dilated pupils, "hard" or "dark" stare



Source: Minnesota VMA



Dog Language: Aggression

- Lips lifted
- Teeth exposed
- May be growling
- Hair may be raised on scruff
- Ears could be back or forward and alert



Source: Minnesota VMA



Dog Language: Calming

- Yawning
- Licking
- Turning away
- Play bow
- Sniffing
- Walking in a curve
- Moving slowly or not at all



General Bite Prevention Tips

- Don't approach an unfamiliar dog
- Don't run away or scream
- Remain motionless
- Let it sniff you before petting
- Avoid direct eye contact
- Don't disturb a dog that is sleeping, eating or caring for puppies



Other Pet Issues in the Home



Turtles & Reptiles

- Salmonella risk
- Not recommended for small children
- Contamination risk
 - Hands
 - Clothes
 - Environment



Dogs & Cats

- Besides Rabies, do you know any diseases that we can get from:
 - Contact from pets?
 - Pet feces?
 - Their fleas and ticks?



Pet Parasites & Diseases: A few facts

- How often should people pick up the dog's feces or clean out the cat's litter box?
- Why?



Pet Parasites – what is a pet owner to do?

- Talk to their veterinarian about parasites
- Use preventatives as recommended
- Have the pet's stool tested at least yearly
- Pick up the pet's stool and clean out litter box at least daily
- Immediately pick up stool when taking the dog on a walk or at the park



On the Brighter Side

- Pets can make us healthier!
 - Walk the dog – get some exercise & meet your neighbors
 - Pet the cat – watch your blood pressure go down
 - Watch pets at play and smile



2020 Healthy Pets Healthy Families

- Aim to improve the health of pets and people
- Coalition to set local health goals
- Educate the community
- Encourage healthy practices



Questions?



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