

A Dog Bite Incident

What to do if your dog bites

If your dog bites a person (family member, friend or stranger) or another dog, the first thing you need to do is ensure safety.

1. Remove your dog calmly and safely from the situation by moving them into another room, putting them on a leash, or putting them in a nearby vehicle.
2. Check on the victim (person or dog). Advise they seek medical attention (veterinarian, hospital, walk-in clinic) immediately, if necessary. In extreme cases, call 911.
3. Exchange personal information. Provide the person or owner with your information, such as name and phone number and your dog's vaccination status. Collect the same information from the other person(s) involved.
4. Are there witnesses? Collect personal information from anyone around who witnessed the incident and ask them to document their observations.
5. Contact your veterinarian to inform them know that a bite incident occurred.
6. Contact your certified dog trainer to let them know that a bite incident occurred. If you are not working with a trainer, please contact one and enroll in a behaviour consultation.



Please note, the victim has the right to call Animal Services, which may investigate the incident further. It is important that you are honest and provide all necessary information requested.

What led to the bite?

It is important to assess the whole situation leading up to, during and following the bite incident. Animal Services, your veterinarian and certified trainer will want to determine if this incident was "provoked," meaning did your dog theoretically have reason to bite.

There are numerous reasons why a dog may bite. They may do so to stop an interaction that is making them uncomfortable, to protect a resource or person, or because they are in pain, to name a few. In most cases, a dog gives communication signals before actually biting, but these can be subtle and missed by the untrained eye. As a dog owner, it is your responsibility to learn the language of canine communication.

Responsible dog ownership

Understand that you are responsible for the actions of your dog at all times. It is important that you supervise your dog and are able to read their body language to ensure all interactions are kept safe and when your dog starts to communicate otherwise, you can intervene safely.

Another responsibility of dog ownership is to be aware of your local municipal and provincial by-laws and always abide by them.

Reference: <https://www.ckc.ca/en/Files/Raising-My-Dog-Section/Responsible-Ownership/Your-Responsibilities-in-Case-of-a-Bite-Incidents>

