First aid for bite wounds

Overview

- Always have your pet checked by your vet if they have been bitten or attacked.
- Bite wounds very often get infected because mouths are so full of bacteria. They also tend to be more serious than they look because of hidden damage below the skin.
- Snakebites are especially dangerous and should be treated ASAP.

What to do if your pet has been bitten

**Step one:** Assess your pet

- Do they seem otherwise ok? Do they have any other injuries? Are they in shock?
- If you are worried about your pet, cover their wounds, keep them warm and take them straight to your vets.

**Step two:** Assess the bite wound

- Small and not bleeding - move to step three.
• **Bleeding heavily** - apply pressure with a dry, clean dressing and go straight to your vets.

• **Areas of skin missing** - cover the wound with a clean, dry dressing and go straight to your vets. If your pet seems painful when you try to cover the wound or you don’t have a dressing available then don’t try to cover the area as you may cause more damage.

• **Snakebite** - put an ice pack (wrapped in a towel) on the bite, and take your pet straight to the nearest vets.

**Step three: Flush the wound**

• If your dog has a small bite wound that isn’t bleeding heavily, flush it with lukewarm, salty water* to remove as much bacteria as possible. Rinse for as long as your dog will tolerate.

• *Make salt water by adding 1 teaspoon of salt to a pint of cooled (previously boiled) water, see image below.

**Step four: Book an appointment with your vet**

• Bite wounds should always be checked by a vet because they are often more serious than they look, and are likely to get infected.

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Salt water for wound cleaning.

Mix 1 teaspoon of salt with COOLED, boiled water.

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