



WHAT TO DO AFTER AN ANIMAL BITE

CLEAN THE WOUND

Immediately wash the area with clean water and soap for 15 minutes. If available, also use an antiseptic like povidone-iodine. This helps wash away germs to decrease the risk of infection.

SEE A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

Wound check: A healthcare provider will make sure the wound is properly cleaned and provide additional care if needed.

Antibiotics: Animal mouths have bacteria. Your healthcare provider may give you a prescription (pills or cream/ointment) to prevent an infection.

Tetanus vaccine: It is recommended you receive a tetanus booster shot if:

- You have never been vaccinated for tetanus or are not sure if you have been vaccinated for tetanus.
- *For clean and minor wounds:* if it has been 10 years or more since your last tetanus shot.
- *For dirty or major wounds:* it has been 5 years or more since your last tetanus shot.

Rabies risk evaluation: Certain animal bites can transmit rabies. Rabies is a deadly disease, but it is preventable if treatment is provided quickly. Your healthcare provider should assess rabies risk and provide necessary care.

Public Health is available for consultations at 213-288-7060 or vet@ph.lacounty.gov.

NOTE THE ANIMAL'S ADDRESS AND CURRENT LOCATION IF KNOWN

Public health will need this information to assess the animal for symptoms of rabies.

REPORT ANIMAL BITES TO PUBLIC HEALTH:

- Animal bites to people that occur in LA County are legally reportable to the LA County Department of Public Health by anyone who has knowledge of the bite.
- Include information about the animal's current location, if known.
- To report a bite:
Visit ph.lacounty.gov/animalbites
Call 213-288-7060
Email vet@ph.lacounty.gov.

