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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN LAKE COUNTY PROMOTES NATIONAL DOG BITE PREVENTION WEEK



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LAKE COUNTY - The Florida Department of Health in Lake County joins the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) to promote May 15-21, 2015 as National Dog Bite Prevention Week. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) more than 4.7 million people in the United States annually suffer from dog bite injuries, approximately half are children. Many of these injuries are from dogs they know and interact with regularly.

“Public education plays an important role in reducing the risk of dog bites particularly with children. We continue to work together to educate our community. Information and education are the best solutions for this public health issue.” said Aaron Kissler, Administrator Florida Department of Health in Lake County

Every year, more than 500 Florida residents are bitten severely enough to require hospitalization and two Floridians die due to injuries sustained from dog bites. Injury rates in Florida are highest among children between the ages of one and nine years old, with boys being bitten more often than girls in the same age group. In addition, a higher proportion of children under ten years of age sustain bites to the head and neck compared to other age groups.

In Lake County most incidents of preventable bites occurred in those 50-64 age range and has been increasing steadily since 2010; in 2015 it was over 800.

Preventable bites are those where the victim could have taken measures to ensure safety when handling domestic and wild animals. It's also important to understand that a significant number of bites go unreported, but it's essential that community members report all incidents, even if the victim is also the owner.

Dog Bite Facts:

- Each year, more than 4.7 million people in the U.S. are bitten by dogs.
- Almost 1 in 5 people bitten by dogs require medical attention.
- Every year, more than 800,000 people in the U.S receive medical attention for dog bites; at least half of them are children.
- Children are, by far, the most common victims of dog bites and are far more likely to be severely injured.
- Most dog bites affecting young children occur during everyday activities and while interacting with familiar dogs.

- Senior citizens are the second most common dog bite victims.

If bitten:

- Seek medical attention immediately from your doctor or urgent/medical care office.
- Control bleeding and wash the area of the bite with soap and water.
- Report the bite to your local county health department, animal control agency or police.

Remember, there are many things you can do to avoid dog bites, ranging from properly training and socializing your pet to educating your children on how or if they should approach a dog. For more information or resources to help you learn more about dog bite prevention visit the AVMA website at www.avma.org

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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