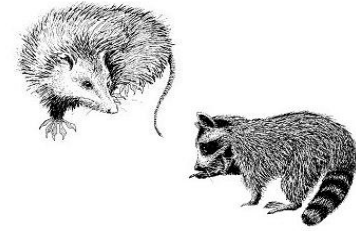


# A Guide to Animal Bites

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, DEPARTMENT of PUBLIC HEALTH  
VETERINARY PUBLIC HEALTH and RABIES CONTROL PROGRAM



## How to Prevent Animal Bites

- Animals are a wonderful and important part of our world. Animals see the world differently than people do. Learn more about what is normal behavior for different types of animals.
- If approached by a stray dog, stay still, do not run, make noise, or move your arms. It will most likely sniff you and then leave.
- Leave animals alone when they are eating and drinking.
- Never tease or scare animals: remember, animals protect their own territory, property, and owners.
- Never mistreat or hurt any animal.
- Never pet animals when they have babies.
- Never try to stop animals when they are fighting.
- Leave sick, injured, or dead animals alone and call you local Department of Animal Control.
- Leave all wild animals alone.

Please contact your local Department of Animal Control to report stray animals.

## If You are Bitten by An Animal

- Animal bites can sometimes cause severe injury, bacterial infections, and (in very rare cases) transmit the fatal virus called rabies.
- If you are attacked by an animal, try to give your bag, coat, or other item for the animal to bite so it does not bite you.
- If you are knocked to the ground – curl in a ball and cover your face and neck with your hands.
- If you are exposed to rabies, you need treatment soon after the bite, before symptoms begin. Ask your doctor about rabies.
- When possible, wash bite area immediately with soap and plenty of water.
- If the biting animal is wild or a stray, confine it if it is safe to do so and contact your local Animal Control Unit.
- Bats are the main source of rabies in L.A. County. Bat bites can be too small to see on your skin. If you wake up to find a bat in your house, do not let it escape. You cannot know if it landed on you or if it has rabies.

Call Animal Control., and report the bat to our department. Do not harm or disturb bats in their natural habitat.

- Seek medical attention, even if the bite or scratch appears minor. Immediately consult your physician or go to a hospital emergency room for treatment. Ask your doctor about rabies.
- Report all bites from an animal to a person to the Los Angeles Veterinary Public Health and Rabies Control Program. **Law requires the reporting of animal bites.**
- Report ALL exposure to bats, even if no bite from the bat was observed.
- Bites from birds, rabbits, and rodents are not legally reportable.

### **Where to report animal bites:**

County of Los Angeles, Dept. of Public Health  
Veterinary Public Health  
and Rabies Control Program  
7601 E. E Imperial Hwy, Bldg 700, Rm 94A  
Downey, CA 90242  
Tel 877-747-2243 Fax 562-401-7112  
[publichealth.lacounty.gov/vet](http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/vet)

