



Pet and Other Animal Bites: Prevention

- Choose a pet who is friendly and tolerates children. Pit bull terriers can be extremely dangerous. German shepherds, Dobermans, and St. Bernards usually do not make good pets for young children. Do not take the risk.
- Teach your dog the commands of "down" and "sit." Teach your child how to give these commands.
- Teach your children not to touch strange animals, break up dogfights, go near a dog who is eating, or touch a sleeping dog.
- Children less than 4 years old should always be supervised around dogs and cats. Never allow them to tease animals.
- Infants less than 1 year old should never be left alone in a room with a pet. Pets have attacked some infants, perhaps because the pets were jealous. There are rare reports of sleeping newborns being smothered by cats.
- Protect your pet against rabies with yearly rabies shots. The first shot is normally given when your pet is 3 to 4 months old.
- Teach your child not to run from a strange dog. Rapid movement can trigger a dog's predatory instinct and cause it to start chasing and possible attacking.
- Never keep wild animals as pets. For example, ferrets have disfigured the faces of young children with their bites.

*NOTE: This information is provided as a public educational service. The information does not replace any of the instructions your physician gives you. If you have a medical emergency please call 911 or call the Hospital at (208) 529-6111. If you have questions about your child's care, please call Idaho Falls Pediatrics at (208) 522-4600.