



My dog bit someone! What do I do?!



Dogs bite for many reasons, and it can be unnerving and scary. But there *are* things you can do if you find yourself in this all too common situation.

Here is some advice to help you and your dog deal with aggressive behavior.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

First, stay calm.

Keep your voice and body calm (no scolding or hitting). Instead, move the dog to safety as quickly as possible.

Next – seek help!

A human-directed bite should not lead to a hasty decision to euthanize the dog. While true behavioral disease does exist, with treatment most dogs who have bitten can enjoy a rich and wonderful life as their families learn to understand them better, and they become easier to manage.

Act immediately to prevent further incidents of aggression while you seek help.

Completely avoid the situation in which the bite occurred and any other situation where your dog seems tense or nervous. For example:

- separate a dog and child
- confine the dog in another room before guests enter the house
- avoid hugging/kissing/petting the dog
- don't let the dog loose in the yard

Find a Behaviorist [HERE](#).

Your veterinary behaviorist will:

- review your dog's entire history, including health, early environment, current environment
- assess the details surrounding the bite to determine a diagnosis, risk assessment and prognosis
- formulate an individualized plan of treatment options.

Beware of unqualified help. Only veterinarians can diagnose physical and mental health problems or prescribe behavior medications for dogs. Dog training is an unregulated business; anyone can claim to be qualified.



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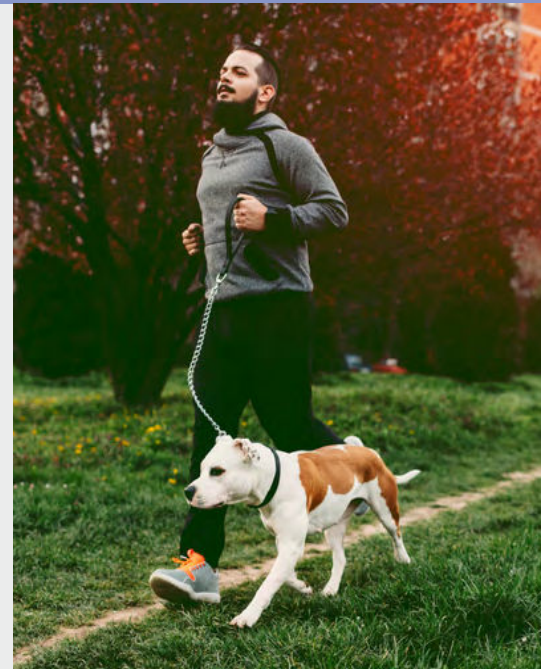
Only veterinarians can make health diagnoses for dogs, and this includes mental health. Pain, metabolic or hormonal problems can contribute to aggression and should be assessed by a veterinarian. Only veterinarians can prescribe behavior medications for dogs.

Families without access to a veterinary behaviorist (DACVB) should consult with their primary care veterinarian, who may prescribe behavior medication if necessary and recommend a trainer to help with management and behavior modification.

Beware of unqualified help.

Dog training is an unregulated business, meaning anyone can claim to be qualified without any professional scientific training. It is important to check the credentials of any trainer you contact. Look specifically for those who use training rewards and management only, and have been privately certified. Here is a partial list of certifications to look for:

- CAAB (Non DVM PhD Behaviorist)
- VTS-Behavior (specialty approved veterinary technician)
- KPA (Karen Pryor Academy)
- CTC (Jean Donaldson Academy)
- CPDT (Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers)
- IAABC (International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants)



There are currently over 80 Board Certified Veterinary Behaviorists (called Diplomates) of the ACVB located throughout the world.

*Don't wait! Seek help the first time your dog bites. For help with a dog who is aggressive, talk to your primary care veterinarian or **FIND A VETERINARY BEHAVIORIST** [here](#).*