



The official fundraising arm of the
Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital.

Our aim is to provide information that will help you understand your child's injury and enable the appropriate after-care.

There are lots of useful injury leaflets to download at the Royal Alexandra website; use the QR code below or follow the link: www.bsuh.nhs.uk/alex/services/accident-and-emergency/



Useful numbers:

NHS 111 - 24hr advice line

Practice Plus (Brighton walk-in Centre) 0333 321 0946

Practice Plus GP - 0300 130 3333

8am/8pm - 7 days a week



Disclaimer: The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

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Reference no. 2161 - Published January 2023. Review January 2026



University Hospitals Sussex

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Children's Emergency Department



Dog Bites & the Dangerous Dogs Act
Information for parents, carers & relatives

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The 6 Golden Rules

for keeping your child safe and your dog happy

- 1 Never leave your child alone in the same room as a dog, even your own.


- 2 Teach your child never to approach dogs when they:

 - are eating or have a treat
 - have a toy or something else they really like
 - are sleeping
 - are unwell, injured or tired
 - are blind or deaf.
- 3 Teach your child to be kind and polite to dogs. Don't let your child climb on dogs, pull their ears or do anything you wouldn't allow them to do to another child.


- 4 Teach your child how to play nicely with your dog. For example, your child can teach your dog some really fun tricks like shake a paw, play dead, or roll-over.


- 5 Supervise your child when they're with your dog – if your dog looks unhappy, let him/her go somewhere they feel safe and happy.


- 6 Never allow your child to approach a dog they don't know, for example when out in the park.



TOP TIP We all need a break sometimes – give your dog a cosy spot in a quiet room where they can have their own space. Teach your child to leave your dog alone when they're in their private spot.

www.rspca.org.uk/safeandhappy

Dog bites and the Dangerous Dogs Act?

In May 2014 changes to the Dangerous Dogs Act came into effect and states that all dog owners should be responsible for their dog's behaviour with other people and animals. Whether you own a large breed dog or a tiny one and no matter how placid and friendly your dog is, the Dangerous Dogs Act applies to you and **the Law applies to ALL dogs.**

It's against the law to let a dog be dangerously out of control anywhere, for example:

- In a public place
- In a private place, such as: neighbour's house or garden
- In the owner's home



Out of Control Dogs

Generally, if a dog bites a person it will be presumed to have been 'dangerously out of control'. However, even if the dog does not bite, but gives the person grounds to feel that the dog may injure them, **the law STILL applies.**

A court could also decide that your dog is dangerously out of control if:

- It injures someone's animal
- The owner of the animal thinks they could be injured if they tried to stop your dog attacking their animal

University Hospitals Sussex (UHS) Safeguarding Children and Young People Team have been advised by Sussex police that if a child has been injured by a dog, the dog has to be reported to police by staff before your child is discharged.

Will my child's dog bite need glue or stitches?

Almost all dog bites that break the skin carry a risk of infection due to the large amount of bacteria that live in a dog's mouth.

For this reason, some wounds are allowed to heal without stitches or glue, because this reduces the chance of the wound becoming heavily infected.

This includes bites that happened over 24 hours before, bites that are already infected, deep puncture wounds, bites which have caused a crush injury, very dirty bites or bites on the legs, arms, hands or feet.

Most bites on the face however will be closed due to the cosmetic concerns.

Will my child need antibiotics?

Your child's wound will be thoroughly cleaned and afterwards we will prescribe a 5 day course of the antibiotic co-amoxiclav to stop any infection developing if the bite has broken the skin.

Please let your doctor or nurse practitioner know if your child is allergic to penicillin as they will need to be given an alternative antibiotic.

Will my child need tetanus or rabies vaccinations?

Tetanus

If your child has had all their routine vaccinations, and the last vaccine was given within 10 years of the bite, they are already covered against tetanus.

Some dog bites may be higher risk for tetanus, and in this case, or if your child has not had their routine vaccinations, your child's doctor or nurse practitioner will advise that they have a tetanus booster and an extra shot against tetanus.

Rabies

The UK is considered to be a 'no risk' country for rabies in dogs, however if your child was bitten by a dog overseas please let your doctor or nurse practitioner know, so that they can check to see if your child needs a rabies shot.

What should I look out for at home?

You should bring your child back to hospital to be seen by a doctor or nurse practitioner as soon as possible if:

- There are any signs of infection (if the wound is not already infected), such as:
 - Redness
 - Pain that is out of proportion to the wound
 - Swelling
 - Smelly discharge
- Your child's bite wound is already infected, but seems to be getting worse or no better despite antibiotics
- Your child becomes unwell with:
 - Fever, vomiting and/or diarrhoea, poor appetite, or a rash close to the wound
- You are worried about your child