



# ANIMAL BITES

An animal bite is a **wound or a break in the skin** caused by an animal bite or claw.

The biggest risk to your health following an animal bite is **infection**.



## First Aid following an animal bite

1. **Wash** the wound. Use **mild soap**, and run **warm tap water** over it for five to 10 minutes.
2. **Slow the bleeding** by applying firm pressure with a clean cloth.
3. Apply **over-the counter antibiotic cream** if you have it.
4. Wrap the wound in a **sterile bandage**.
5. Keep the wound bandaged and **go to an Emergency Department (ED), Urgent Care, or call UHS.**



## Signs of **wound infection** to watch for:

- **Redness**
- Puffiness or **swelling**
- Increase in **pain**
- **Red streaks** from site
- **Fever**
- **Pus** or increased drainage from wound

## Seek medical care. You may need:

- **Stitches** or more advanced bandaging and **wound care**
- **Tetanus vaccine** if you are due for a booster or do not know when you had your last dose
- **Rabies vaccination** series, depending on the animal that bit you (particularly bats and racoons) - *The first dose will be given in the ED, but subsequent doses may be done here at UHS*
- **Antibiotics** if you are at a high risk for *infection*

## Call UHS if:

- You were bit by an animal and are not sure what to do next
- You notice signs of **wound infection**
- You wish to discuss your **vaccination** status or schedule immunizations



Check out the latest updates and details from:

← **the Cleveland Clinic** and **the Mayo Clinic** →

(Dog bites and details)

(Animal bite first aid)



Saint Liam Hall, Notre Dame

(574) 631-7497 - uhs.nd.edu