

HUMAN / ANIMAL BITES

Level I

Skill Level: LPN, RN

Definition: **Animal Only** - Bites of any animal, provoked or unprovoked.

<p>Subjective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe mechanism of injury.	<p>Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impaired skin integrity - Animal or Human Bite.• Risk for Infection
<p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small wound or scratch.• No signs of erythema or swelling.• Not a cat or a human bite.• May be an animal bite by a fox, skunk, raccoon or other animal.	<p>Plan:</p> <p>At nursing discretion may use any of the below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cleanse with Betasept soap and water.• Instruct patient to keep wound clean and dry.• Check Tetanus status, and give Tetanus Vaccine if indicated.• Instruct patient to return to clinic for signs or symptoms of infection, decreased range of motion, or increasing pain.• Contact the Health Department for animal bites.

Nursing Education:

1. Animal bites should be reported to the Oregon State Health Division.
2. For animal bites:
 - Talk to the person bitten and other witnesses to get a first-hand account of what was happening when the bite occurred. Differentiate “unprovoked” and “provoked” bites. In the technical sense used for rabies investigations, these terms do not imply anything about the rights or wrongs of human (or animal!) behavior.
 - A bite is considered “*unprovoked*” when an animal crosses neutral space and attacks “for no reason.” Such incidents are rare.
 - Almost all bites are provoked, meaning that—in context—the bite was understandable (if not strictly speaking normal) behavior. Typical provoked bite situations include:

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- persons bitten by unfamiliar or non-domesticated animals they were interacting with (e.g. petting a stray cat, feeding squirrels, breaking up a fight between animals, cornering a raccoon on the porch, etc.);
 - persons bitten by injured animals (e.g., dogs hit by cars);
 - persons bitten by dogs protecting “their space,” (e.g., a front yard, their food).
3. Bites to the head or neck increase the urgency of the situation, as they decrease the time when rabies prophylaxis is likely to be effective. Conversely, adequate first aid, especially thorough washing of the wound with soap and water, greatly decreases risk.
4. For cat or human bites, use Level II.

APPROVED:

Medical Services Manager

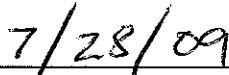
Date

Chief Medical Officer

Date



Medical Director



Date

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