

# ST. NICHOLAS HOSPITAL HEALTHSOURCE

## Beware of Dog Bites

Every 40 seconds someone seeks medical care because of a dog bite. While many dogs are “man’s best friend,” dog bites are dangerous.

Each year 4.7 million Americans are bitten and 20 more are killed by dogs. Dog bites pose numerous dangers, from the risk of infection to emotional trauma to a lifetime of scars—even when treated by a plastic surgeon.

Stray dogs are often perceived as the greatest danger; however, 70% of dog bites occur on the dog owner’s property. Because children make up 60% of dog bite victims, it is important that parents and children know what to do if a dog attacks.

- Never take a dog for granted—even a typically mild-mannered family pet.
- Do not approach an unfamiliar dog, even if it looks friendly.
- If an unfamiliar dog approaches you, stand “like a tree” with your hands at your sides.
- Never run from a dog; it may think you are playing or look upon you as “prey.”
- If a dog knocks you down, roll into a ball and stay still.
- Don’t look a dog right in the eye.
- Don’t disturb a dog that is eating, sleeping, or caring for puppies.
- Know the warning signs—growling, raised lip, or hair raised on the back—that might indicate a dog is ready to bite.
- Teach children not to play with dogs unless supervised by an adult.
- Teach children to tell adults if they see a strange dog or a dog acting strangely.

Dog owners should:

- Never leave children alone with a dog—not even the family pet.
- Obedience train and socialize your dog.
- Not play aggressive games with your dog.
- Spay or neuter your dog, as dogs that have been neutered or spayed are less likely to bite.

If a dog bites you, apply a clean dressing to the wound and go to the nearest emergency room for immediate emergency medical attention.

By following these guidelines, you can have a safe, enjoyable relationship with your dog.



**Jeffrey A. Herold, MD, FACS**

Great Lakes Plastic Surgery  
1526 North Taylor Drive  
Sheboygan, WI 53081  
920/803-1598



## St. Nicholas Hospital

3100 Superior Avenue  
Sheboygan, WI 53081  
920/459-8300

[www.stnicholashospital.org](http://www.stnicholashospital.org)

*An Affiliate of Hospital Sisters Health System*

In Partnership With

**PHYSICIANS'**  
**HEALTH NETWORK**