



## ANIMAL BITES WHAT TO DO AND WHO TO CALL

For all incidents involving domestic animal bites:

### **In Jefferson County, outside the city:**

Call Jefferson County Animal Services via the Sheriff Dispatcher at 360-385-3831, ext. 1.

Animal Services will investigate the circumstances of the incident and check on the animal's rabies vaccination status. They will report to Jefferson County Public Health if there is a possible rabies exposure. Decisions on what to do with the animal and how to treat the person who was bitten will be determined once the information is collected.

### **In Port Townsend:**

Call the Port Townsend Police, 360-385-2322

### **If you have been bitten by an animal:**

1. Wash the wound immediately with soap and water. Wash for a **full five minutes**. (Get a clock and time the washing.)
2. Get medical attention. Puncture wounds are prone to infection and may become serious. You may also need a tetanus booster.

### **For domestic animals:**

1. Call Jefferson County Animal Services or Port Townsend Police depending on where you live, see above.
2. **Do not harm the animal.**  
It is very important that the animal is alive and in a safe place for a 10 day observation period. In most situations, the animal can be observed for 10 days while staying at the pet owner's home. The animal should not come into contact with other persons or animals during the period. Do not shoot the animal or injure its head. If the animal has rabies, it will most likely develop signs of illness and die within 5-6 days. If the animal develops signs of illness, or dies, the animal must be examined by a veterinarian. Laboratory tests will be conducted on the brain tissue.
3. If the animal is not up to date for rabies vaccine, make sure it is vaccinated once the observation period is completed. Do not vaccinate during the observation period. The vaccine may briefly make the animal seem sick and could cause it to be euthanized (put down) unnecessarily.

### **For wild animals:**

1. Call Jefferson County Animal Services via the Sheriff Dispatcher at 360-385-3831, ext. 1
2. If you have captured the animal, **Do not harm the animal.**
3. Do not allow other persons to come in contact with the animal.

### **For Bat bites:**

1. Capture the bat using heavy gloves and call Jefferson County Public Health to have the bat tested. 360-385-9400
2. Go to the emergency room to be evaluated for treatment with rabies vaccine and rabies immune globulin (RIG).

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