

Bite Wounds

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Overview

Bite wounds are often the result when two animals engage in a fight or aggressive play. Dog bites can result in significant trauma, like crushing, tearing, puncturing and lacerations of the skin and underlying tissues. Cat bites are typically puncture wounds with possible tearing or laceration. This is due to the small, sharp teeth of cats as compared to dogs.

Bite wounds, which may only appear as a small puncture wound in the skin, can actually be quite extensive. Once the tooth penetrates the skin, severe damage can occur to the underlying tissues without major skin damage.

Since the mouth is an environment filled with bacteria, all bite wounds are considered contaminated and the possibility of infection is high.

Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- Bite wounds are typically diagnosed through physical exam and a history of a fight or rough play. Wounds are most commonly found on the neck, face and legs.
- Treatment depends on the part of the body injured, severity of the wounds, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. Bite wounds are usually painful and pain medication is often given. The risk of infection is high so antibiotics will be administered after the wounds are thoroughly cleaned and the surrounding hair and debris removed. Some wounds will require surgery and possibly placement of a drain. Discuss treatment details when your pet is diagnosed with this condition.

What to Watch for*:

- Bleeding
- Swelling
- Drainage
- Limping
- Breathing difficulty

- Weakness
- Collapse
- Lack of appetite

**Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!*