



# Health Tribune

Thinking about your health in Portage County  
Provided by the Portage County Health Department

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## May 15-21, 2011: National Dog Bite Prevention Week

### *May 15-21, 2011 is... National Dog Bite Prevention Week*

National Dog Bite Prevention Week was created to educate and remind all Americans about preventing dog bites, and to maintaining a safe environment for family, friends, and neighbors around dogs.



#### **How to Approach a Dog:**

- Always walk slowly and quietly to the dog's owner to ask if you can pet the dog.
- If the owner says "yes", curl your hand into a closed fist with the back of your hand facing upward. Extend your hand slowly to the dog.
- Allow the dog to sniff the back of your hand.
- After the dog has sniffed your hand and has become familiar with you, pet it gently under the chin or on the chest.
- Respect a dog's space. Do not stick your face into a dog's face or poke or prod at a dog with your hands; this may make it feel afraid.

#### **Dogs at Parties and Gatherings:**

- Put the dog in his crate with a favorite chew toy, at least during the most hectic times – guests arriving and leaving as well as dinner preparation and serving.
- Assign one adult to watch the dog for signs of stress and protect it from unwanted attention from children.
- If you have multiple dogs consider kenneling them or keeping them in another room during large gathering.
- Supervise dogs at all times.

#### **Signs a Dog is Going to Bite:**

- Dog freezes– becomes suddenly stiff.
- Dog stands with front legs spread out, head down, looking at you.
- Dog curls lip to show teeth.
- If a dog shows any of these signs, look away and stop all interaction with the dog.

For more information about ways to stay safe around dogs check out [www.doggonessafe.com](http://www.doggonessafe.com)

### *Did you know...?*

According to the American Veterinarian Medical Association, in 2010 nearly 5 million people were bitten by dogs in the United States.

#### **What to Do if You Are Bitten:**

- Contact your local health department to report the bite.
- As part of the report, you will be asked to fill out a form concerning the incident.
- The owner of the dog will be contacted and advised by letter to quarantine (keep the dog separate from others) for 10 days.
- At the end of the 10 day quarantine the owner will contact the Health Department to report on the status of the dog.
- An inspector from the health department will come to assess the dogs behavior and health.
- If the dog is acting normally, the inspector will close the case.
- If the dog is not acting normal, the person bitten will be advised to see a doctor and start post exposure rabies treatments.

#### **Who to Call Locally in Case of a Dog Bite:**

- Portage County Health Department: 330-296-9919
- Kent City Health Department: 330-678-8109
- Ravenna City Health Department: 330-296-3864
- Robinson Memorial Hospital: 330-297-0811
- Dog Warden: toll free 1-800-772-3799



### Questions or Comments?

Contact Us!

449 S. Meridian Street  
Ravenna, Ohio 44266  
Phone: (330) 296-9919

Email: [pchd@portageco.com](mailto:pchd@portageco.com)

<http://www.co.portage.oh.us/healthdepartment.htm>