

A speech bubble icon with a rainbow gradient border and a dark blue center containing the text 'Patient Information' in white.

**Patient  
Information**

# Animal and Human Bites

## First Aid

If you have been bitten by an animal, or have suffered a human bite, it is important the wound is cleaned thoroughly. Running tap water is suitable. Human and animal bites can easily become infected if the wounds are not thoroughly cleaned.

## Treatment

- On your arrival your wound will be assessed by a nurse.
- All superficial bites and scratches will be cleaned thoroughly. A deep wound, for example, caused by a dog's tooth, may not be stitched due to the risk of infection.
- Paper stitches, called steri-strips, may sometimes be applied to the wound to help keep the skin closed. But often it is best to simply leave the wound "open" with a dressing applied.
- Do not worry – most of these wounds will close as they heal.
- Rarely, the wound may require stitching at a later date, once the risk of infection has passed.



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If your injury affects your arm, you may be required to wear a high sling to help prevent further swelling – as this may occur. A full course of antibiotic therapy may be prescribed for some bites, human and animal. Please take these as prescribed.

You may also be given a course or booster dose of Antitetanus Toxoid injection, depending on your immunity status.

In the case of a human bite, a blood sample may be collected for further tests, if required, in the future. You may also be given the first dose of Antihepatitis B vaccine injection. In this case you will need to make an appointment with your General Practitioner (GP) for further follow-up, which may include:

- Completion of a course of Hepatitis B Vaccine;
- Counselling;
- Further blood tests at three and six months.

A follow up appointment may be given to you to attend the Emergency Department to check on your injury, or you may be advised to attend your local doctor or Practice Nurse.

## Important Points to be Aware of

Following any animal or human bite, you should seek further advice **immediately**, if you develop any of these symptoms:

- Increased redness or swelling,
- A red streak or line going up your limb,
- The wound becomes more painful;



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- Raised temperature, feverishness or lethargy.

**Please retain this leaflet for future reference.**

**For further advice or information you can  
telephone your local Minor Injury Unit (MIU):**

## **Chippenham Community Hospital**

Rowden Hill  
Chippenham  
SN15 2AJ

Tel: 01249 456 403/4

Open: 07:00am to 23:00am; 7 days a week

## **Trowbridge Community Hospital**

Adcroft Street  
Trowbridge  
BA14 8PH

Tel: 01225 711 329

Open: 07:00am to 23:00am; 7 days a week



# Animal and Human Bites

From 1st January 2019 smoking will not be permitted on any NHS site in England. Smoking will not be permitted within any of our buildings or anywhere outside on our sites. Smoking facilities will not be provided. Please be considerate of others when vaping in hospital grounds

**This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email [gwh.pals@nhs.net](mailto:gwh.pals@nhs.net)**

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