



Kitrina Journell, DVM
Animal Hospital of
Lewisville

Dr. Kitrina Journell graduated from the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana College of Veterinary Medicine in 2007 and then worked in the suburbs of Chicago for two years before relocating to North Carolina. Dr. Journell met her husband while completing her

Biology, Pre-med Degree at James Madison University. They are now happy to call North Carolina home and enjoy exploring all NC has to offer with their daughter Hadleigh and three furry kids (Parker, Abe, and Madison)! Dr. Journell loves practicing at the Animal Hospital of Lewisville because of the close relationships she has been able to establish with many clients and their pets.

Bite Wounds - Dogs, Cats & Snakes... *Oh my!*

Many pets present to our animal hospital with bite wounds that may be from another pet or wildlife. Animal bite wounds can sometimes cause tissue necrosis (or die off) several days after the infliction of the wound and lead to sloughing of the skin. It is very important to seek help from your veterinarian as soon as possible.

Most bite wounds can be very painful to your pets. They require immediate help in controlling their pain and assessing their risk for infection. Be careful handling your pet because they may be more likely to bite you since they are in pain. Snake bites can sometimes be identified by seeing the fang punctures but often the hallmark signs are rapid swelling, hemorrhage, and pain. They typically require more workup especially when it is an unknown type of snake. Venomous snakes can cause changes in blood pressure and it can affect clotting times in the blood. The doctor will decide what tests need to be run and if Antivenin (antivenom product) is necessary. Although Antivenin (AV) is really the only proven treatment for snake envenomation, many bites do not require AV and are considered dry bites. However, any patient with a venom-induced coagulopathy (clotting disorder) or thrombocytopenia (low platelet count) needs AV.

There are times where surgery may be indicated to debride (or cut away) dying tissue. Often times the deeper tissue in-

juries are worse than the visible injuries on the pet which can sometimes lead to multiple repairs or surgeries being necessary for total healing.



Important Points to Remember

- Pets that are off leash or in a fenced-in area may come into contact with other animals, some of them not so friendly. If you see the perpetrator during or after the attack, especially if it's a snake, please remember to give your veterinarian a detailed description if possible.
- Try to keep your pet as calm as possible, protect yourself, they are scared and in pain, they may snap or bite you because of their discomfort.
- Get to your veterinarian as soon as possible, early treatment lessens the suffering and possible long term negative effects.
- Make sure your pet is up-to-date on all vaccinations, a bite from an unknown animal can prove tragic!



**THE ANIMAL HOSPITAL
OF LEWISVILLE**

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