

Hospitalizations & ED Visits for Dog Bite Injuries Children Aged 0-17 Years, 2005-2009

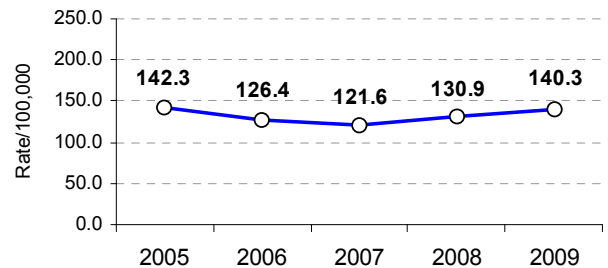


Dog bites to children are a largely preventable public health problem. In most cases the dog that bit the child was their own dog or the dog of a neighbor and the bite occurred at someone's home. This indicates that most bites to children are preventable through supervision and education of children and families.

Between 2005-2009, there were 52 hospitalizations and 3,897 emergency department (ED) visits due to dog bites to Miami-Dade County children aged 0-17 years. No deaths occurred from dog bites to this age group during this period.

- The injury rate for dog bite injuries to children has changed very little between 2005-2009.
- Nonfatal dog bites occurred most frequently on the weekend (35% of cases) and during the evening hours of 6pm-9pm (31% of cases).

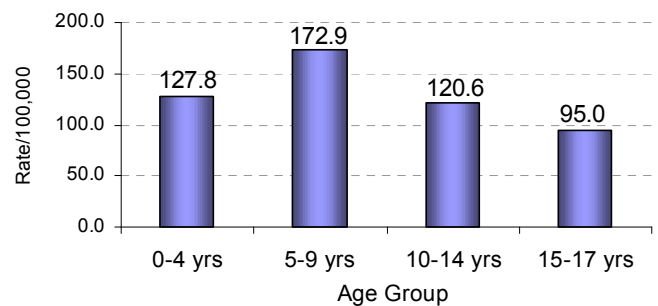
**Dog Bite Injury Rate, Residents Aged 0-17
Miami-Dade Co., 2005-09**



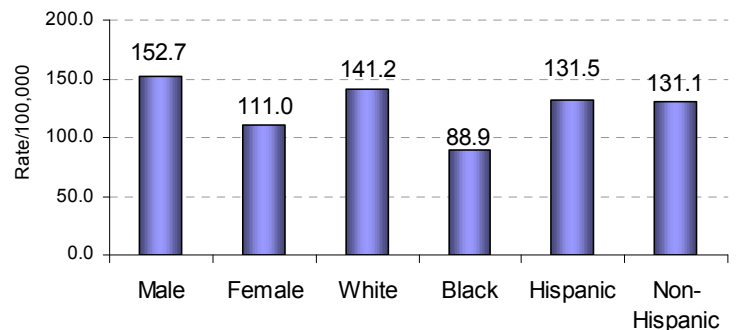
Who is At Risk?

- Nonfatal dog bites occurred most often to children under 14 years of age. Children aged 5-9 years had the highest rate of nonfatal dog bites over these 5 years.
- Male children suffered 59% of nonfatal dog bites and had a dog bite rate 38% higher than female children.
- White children suffered 76% of nonfatal dog bites and had a dog bite rate 59% higher than black children.
- There were no ethnic differences for dog bite rates among county children.

**Dog Bite Rate by Age Group
Hospitalized and ED Visits
Miami-Dade Co, 2005-09**

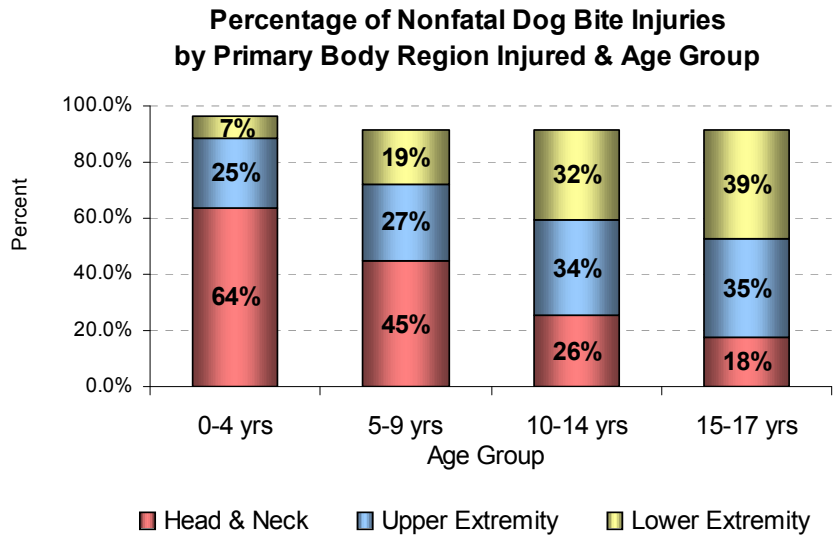


**Dog Bite Rate by Gender, Race, Ethnicity
Hospitalized and ED Visits
Miami-Dade Co, 2005-09**



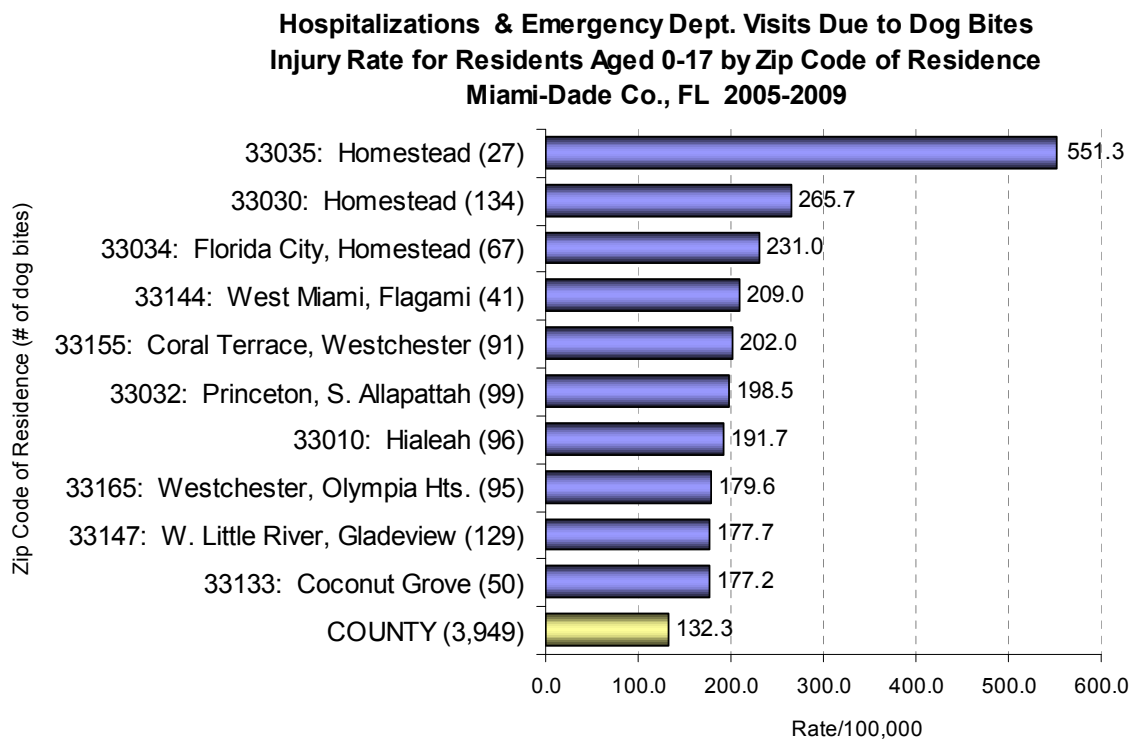
Body Region Injured by Dog Bite Injuries

- Two out of every three nonfatal dog bite injuries to children aged 0-4 years were to the child's face or head.
- As children aged, the percentage of dog bite injuries to the face or head decreased (red bars) and injuries to the lower extremity increased (yellow bars).
- 78% of dog bite injuries were open wounds and another 17% were superficial cuts and contusions.



Residence of Children Injured by Dog Bites

- Three zip codes for the communities of Homestead and Florida City (33035, 33030, 33034) had the highest child injury rates due to dog bites.
- Three zip codes in the central part of the county that included the communities of Westchester and West Miami (33144, 33155, 33165) were also among the ten highest injury rates.



Preventing Dog Bites

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lists several ways children can reduce their chances of being bitten by a dog (1).

Teach Children Basic Safety Around Dogs and Review Regularly:

- Do not approach an unfamiliar dog. Do not run from a dog and scream.
- Remain motionless (e.g., "be still like a tree") when approached by an unfamiliar dog.
- If knocked over by a dog, roll into a ball and lie still (e.g., "be still like a log").
- Do not play with a dog unless supervised by an adult.
- Do not pet a dog without allowing it to see and sniff you first.
- Immediately report stray dogs or dogs displaying unusual behavior to an adult.
- If bitten, immediately report the bite to an adult.

Things to Consider Before You Get a Dog:

- Consult with a professional (e.g., veterinarian) to learn about suitable breeds of dogs for your household.
- Be sensitive to cues that a child is fearful or apprehensive about a dog and, if so, delay acquiring a dog.
- Spend time with a dog before buying or adopting it. Use caution when bringing a dog into the home of an infant or toddler. Never leave infants or young children alone with any dog.
- Spay/neuter virtually all dogs (this frequently reduces aggressive tendencies).
- Do not play aggressive games with your dog (e.g., wrestling).
- Properly socialize and train any dog entering the household. Teach the dog submissive behaviors (e.g., rolling over to expose abdomen and relinquishing food without growling).

Source: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention Injury Center,
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/duip/biteprevention.htm>

Produced by the Miami-Dade County Injury Surveillance System

Data Sources: Death Certificates, Office of Vital Statistics, FL Dept. of Health
Medical Examiner Records, Miami County Medical Examiner Dept.
Hospital Discharge Data, Agency for Health Care Administration
PHONE (IFCK): 305-804-7212 (MDCHD): 305-470-5649
E-MAIL: stephen.dearwater@jhs-miami.org
WEBSITE: <http://dadehealth.org/injury/INJURYintro.asp>

