Tourist guide

Staying safe around stray dogs on holiday

#Betterlivesfordogs

Follow these tips to learn how to protect dogs, and yourself, while travelling

Facts about dog bites

• Dog bites account for over 50% of animal-related injuries in people who are travelling, so be careful when approaching dogs you don’t know.

• Up to 99% of human rabies cases are transmitted by dog bites. And 95% of cases happen in Africa and Asia.

• Get advice from a doctor about whether you need a rabies vaccination before you travel.

• Dog bites may lead to governments cruelly killing dogs either due to a fear of rabies or to reduce numbers of stray dogs. So, keeping yourself protected from dog bites protects dogs in the long-run.

• If you are worried about the welfare of a stray dog, report it to the local authority or a local animal welfare organisation.

Avoiding bites

• It’s important to leave dogs alone, especially while they are eating, sleeping, with their puppies, or when they are in a small space. Stay calm and quiet around them.

• In the heat of the day, dogs will find somewhere cool to rest. Keep a lookout for dogs who may be taking shelter in unexpected places, as you may startle them.

• If a dog approaches you, stay still and quiet like a tree and avoid eye contact. Don’t run or throw anything. A dog will lose interest and leave you alone.

• Don’t feed stray dogs – even if a dog is begging for food. Although some dogs may seem like they are alone, many have owners or carers who let them roam free during the day.

If you get bitten

• Wash the wound immediately with soapy water.

• However small the wound is, or even if the skin isn’t broken, find a first aid centre urgently.

• Find out whether you need post-exposure rabies vaccination, a tetanus jab or any other treatment.