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Dog bite

By ANIKA FORSMAN 13 Sep 2007

SEVEN-YEAR-OLD Brehna Williams (pictured) may have been infected by the savage dog which attacked the Arrowtown girl last weekend.

The body of the dog, put down on Tuesday, is now being tested to establish whether it has made the youngster sick.

Brehna was re-admitted to hospital three days after the initial mauling. "They think the dog might have had something [to cause the reaction] and so they're testing the dog to see what it could be," says mother Rae Williams.

Williams took her daughter back to hospital for a day on Tuesday when she became ill and wouldn't stop vomiting.

"She's woken up feeling much better today [Wednesday] though," says Williams.

Brehna had been playing with a friend on a reserve near her home last Saturday, when a red heeler broke loose from its owner and went for her.

The dog bite punctured her right cheek, damaging her front teeth and leaving her with a gash above her eye needing 14 stitches.

"As soon as I saw [Brehna] I just froze," says Williams. "I didn't know if she was going to live, there was blood everywhere – it was the most frightening thing I've ever experienced.

"You could see the absolute terror in her eyes and her heart was just pounding so hard."

Brehna's father Mark Williams was working in Frankton when the incident happened and followed the ambulance heading to Arrowtown.

"It's awful running across a paddock not knowing what you're going to see when you get there," he says. "All I knew was that Brehna had been attacked by a dog."

Brehna's parents want to appeal to dog owners to be more vigilant when securing their dogs and if they have a problem animal, keep it from roaming the streets.

Police told the family the dog was put down at the owner's request and it's not known yet if further action will be taken.

"Thank God it's gone now, but there are so many other dogs in Arrowtown that have the potential to do the same," says Rae Williams.

Advanced Vets Ngaire Mace believes the chances of a dog passing on a disease to a human would be rare.



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She says people can become sick after a bite that breaks the skin.

The Williams family are still shaken and will receive counselling from Victim Support.

And Brehna? "I'm still scared, I don't know if I want to go near a dog again."

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