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72-year-old woman attacked by dog

She needs the dog to be tested for rabies

Dalson Chen, The Windsor Star

Published: Wednesday, October 08, 2008

Finding the dog that bit her last weekend is the only hope a desperate 72-year-old Windsor woman has of avoiding seven injections to guard against rabies.

"I pet every dog I see. I love animals," said Julie Macko. "I think I have to be smartened up. I never was afraid -- now, I'm afraid."

Macko said she was caring for her parents' graves at St. Alphonsus Cemetery around 3:30 p.m. Saturday when she was startled by a German shepherd.



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Julie Macko, 72, is desperate to find the dog that bit her on her wrist last Saturday, Oct. 4, 2008. If she can't locate the unknown German Shepherd after this weekend, she'll have to get seven injections to guard against rabies.

Tyler Brownbridge, The Windsor Star

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Although the dog barked and growled at Macko, she reached out to pet it.

"I wanted to calm it," she said.

The dog reacted by quickly biting Macko on her right arm. The bite was hard enough to break the skin, leaving three bleeding marks on either side of her wrist.

The dog was being walked on a leash by a woman. Macko said the woman asked her repeatedly if she was OK. "I kept saying to her, 'Get that dog away from me.' I was terrified of it by that time because it was so agitated."

Now Macko regrets that she shooed the woman away. On the advice of a family member, Macko went to hospital later that day and received tetanus and antibiotics shots.

On Monday, Macko's doctor told her the dog needs to be found and checked or she'll have to endure injections of the rabies vaccine.

"I'd never been bitten by a dog. Now I realize what you have to go through," said Macko, whose case has been reported to the local health unit.

"(The doctor) said there is a series of seven shots. They used to inject them into the belly at one time, and there were a lot more. Now he says it's much more refined."

Macko said she wants to avoid more needles. Throughout the week, she's been wandering the neighbourhoods around St. Alphonsus Cemetery, located at Howard Aveune and Ottawa Street, knocking on doors and asking for German shepherd owners. "I have to locate that dog."

Macko said she was told there's a window of 10 days following a dog bite when checking the biting dog can eliminate the necessity of injection treatment. "Ten days.... After that, the shots have to begin."

Macko is appealing to the owner of the German shepherd to come forward. She stresses that she doesn't wish any harm on the dog and has no interest in any kind of lawsuit.

"It was a beautiful, clean-looking animal," she said. "That's all I'm anxious to know - that it's had its shots, that it's not rabid."

Anyone who knows anything about the dog that bit Macko can call her at 519-419-2712.

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