



Setu Peni recovers from a dog attack in Hawke's Bay Hospital, his granddaughter, Leohana, by his side.

LEAD STORY: Man severely hurt as dog rips into him

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A victim of a dog attack on Saturday is determined to see the owner in court, after being admitted to hospital with serious groin and hand injuries.

Setu Peni, a 59-year old grandfather from Flaxmere, Hastings, was still in shock as he lay in Hawke's Bay Hospital yesterday, his injuries a painful reminder of a day he thought he might die.

Mr Peni and his wife were scouring a local garage sale on Kingsley St, Flaxmere, on Saturday when Mr Peni saw the large, light brown-coloured dog.

''I saw the dog get out of the car and run to some children on the other side of the road, so I tried to hurry up and get rid of what I was holding,' Mr Peni said from his hospital bed.

''The owner was calling it to get away from the children but when I put my stuff inside with my wife, I couldn't see where the dog had gone. ''That's when he attacked me. I called my wife in the garage sale to come. She asked me what happened but I couldn't even talk about it, I just had to get to the hospital because it was just too painful.'

The dog's bite ripped a deep cut in Mr Setu's groin, and skin had been torn off his hand.

His wife, Ada, who has since reported the attack to Hastings police, was devastated at the news her husband might never fully recover from the injuries.

''My husband's manhood has been damaged and he is going to be scarred by this for the rest of his life. He'll never forget what happened and will never be the same again because someone didn't look after their dog or even just have it on a leash,' Mrs Peni said.

''We're going to push it to court now because we have to put a stop to things like this happening once and for all.'

Mrs Peni said the children, including a baby who was swept out of the way by an older child, were lucky to have escaped the dog.

The owner of the dog was apologetic yesterday morning and said she had tried to apologise after the attack. While she couldn't do anything to undo the injuries, she turned the dog into the local authorities and had the year-old ridgeback-cross puppy, named Koko, destroyed.

The woman said the dog had been a family pet for a year and had no history of violence but rarely left the fenced property.

The family had decided to take the dog for a ride in the car on Saturday and it escaped when her son opened the door.

Mr Peni was expected to return home yesterday. Police were investigating the incident.

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