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## Dog mauls 4-year-old in brutal Cape attack

By Dawn Witlin  
Thursday, September 15, 2005 - Updated: 02:58 AM EST

**A** 4-year-old girl who may have been the victim of the controversial phenomenon known as "Springer Rage" was taken via MedFlight into Boston yesterday afternoon to have facial lacerations stitched up, after she was mauled by a springer spaniel named Harmony in Marstons Mills.

While the girl's parents, a couple from Sandwich who were there to pick up a wood stove from Harmony's owner, left her and their 7-year-old son unattended in the front yard with Harmony, the dog went haywire, police say.

"The parents were in the process of loading the stove into the car in the back yard when they heard the girl screaming," said Sgt. Sean Sweeney of the Barnstable police.

The tot suffered multiple facial bites that will need stitches, some that were dangerously close to her eye, Sweeney said. Harmony was left untethered by its owner, who told animal control officers she has no history of violent behavior.

Veterinarians dispute whether the condition that some call "Springer Rage" is real. Some theorize that a tendency exists in the springer spaniel bloodline to become suddenly and viciously aggressive.

Harmony was placed under a 10-day quarantine by animal control officers pending further investigation. The parents sought no criminal complaint. The name and condition of the 4-year-old was not released.

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