

## Dogs Rarely Get Tetanus

**Puncture from a rusty nail not likely to cause a problem.**

*Jon Geller, DVM*

Q. Our dog stepped on a rusty nail. We got it out, put hydrogen peroxide on the wound, and kept her off her foot for most of the day. Can dogs get tetanus from a nail?

A. This is a great question. Why do humans get tetanus vaccinations on a regular basis, but dogs do not?

Dogs (and cats) are very resistant to the effects of the bacterium *Clostridium tetani*, which causes lockjaw, or tetanus, in humans after it gets established in wounds. There are a few reports of lockjaw in dogs, but it is rare.

Just so you know, horses, and cattle other livestock are susceptible, and should be vaccinated on a regular basis.