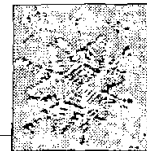


COLD REALITIES OF EXERCISE

Is it ever too cold to work up a sweat outdoors? No, say several experts, but the myths surrounding workouts in freezing temperatures are enough to make you ill. Here's an attempt to do away with the hearsay.

— Today in Life, Page D-1



Alaska

Alaska's kids at risk of dog attack

1991-2002: Those younger than 4 who were hospitalized tripled the national average.

By **CHRISTI HANG**
Fairbanks Daily News-Miner

Alaskans — especially very young Alaskans — were much more likely to be killed or seriously injured by dog bites from 1991-2002 than residents of the Lower 48, according to the state Section of Epidemiology.

Nine people died and 288 were hospitalized for injuries in that period.

The oldest Alaskan to die was just over 5 years old while nationally half of deaths occurred in people older than 10, the agency reported.

Among those who required hospitalization, the rate of Alaska children younger than 4 years old was three times higher than the national rate, the report said.

Among Alaska regions, the Southwest area had the highest rate of injuries requiring hospitalization, with 10.4 per 100,000 people. The northern region was next with 9.4. The Anchorage/Mat-Su area had a rate of 3.1. The information was published in a recent notice by the state agency.

The information comes from the state's dog bite fatality database and the Alaska Trauma Registry, said Louisa Castrodale, who compiled the data for the state.

Eight of the nine deaths were of Alaska Natives, and the mean age of incidents that ended in death was 45 months. Alaska Natives also made up 40 percent of injury hospitalizations, but Castrodale said the data cannot say why there is a significantly higher number of Native injuries because it focused on ages only and not factors.

See Page A-4, **BITES**

Dog bites at a glance

DOG BITE DEATHS

TOTAL 1991-2002: 9
MEDIAN AGE: 54 months
AGE RANGE: 9 to 64 months
CIRCUMSTANCES: Three cases of free-roaming dogs, three of chained dogs, one victim wandered into dog lot, one attacked indoors by pet, one unknown

DOG BITE HOSPITALIZATIONS

TOTAL 1991-2002: 288
MEDIAN AGE: 9 years
GENDER OF VICTIM: 57 percent males
RACE: 60 percent Natives
AVERAGE DAYS IN HOSPITAL: 3
KINDS OF INJURIES: head and neck, 43 percent; upper extremity, 40 percent

BITES: *Dogs signal stress*

Continued from A-3

Castrodale also said the data does not include dog bite injuries that do not result in hospitalization because those are untrackable. But Matt Ruger, Fairbanks North Star Borough Animal Control manager, said the majority of bites that break the skin are unintentional and can be the result of something as simple of taking a toy out of the mouth of an eager dog.

WARNING SIGNS

Ruger said there are signs to watch for to prevent a dog bite such as the dog freezing in place; frequently licking its mouth; or having a hard,

unblinking stare and having its ears down.

Ruger said people should also avoid unknown dogs. If an unfamiliar dog must be approached, it's best to extend the back of the hand — slowly and with no eye contact — because fingers are more easily bitten than the back of the hand.

Bites occur, Ruger said, because of the animal's prey response, which is caused by a smaller living thing running or something like a smile or a low voice that dogs can mistake for the aggressive gestures of baring teeth and growling.

"Any dog is capable of biting," Ruger said.

BLOOD BANK

Hours: Dimond Center, 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday-Sunday; main center, 4000

Folk Festival celebration. Complete schedule online at www.anchoragefolkfestival.org/folkweek.htm.

Magic Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m., Henry's Great Alaskan Restaurant, 8001 Old

Mat-Su Borough: green peas, peach bread, milk.

COMMUNIT

Agenda Item N. 2.

Committee P+P

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