

VTG Tip Sheet:

Aggressive Dogs & Injured Handlers

We always get asked about the perfect “knock down drug” for injured aggressive dogs or dogs that are being protective of an injured handler. In our experience and querying handlers who have experienced this situation, this is not the case. Most of dogs that were injured, from minor lacerations to serious gunshot wounds, in OIF and OEF, were not aggressive or protective under any circumstances.

If you can get close enough to inject the dog with a sedative, then more than likely you can get a leash around him and lead him away. Additionally most drugs will take several minutes to take effect and when a dog is in “drive” they tend to “burn through” pain medications and sedatives quicker than normal.

Training prior to employment of an assault/apprehension dog should include canine familiarization for all members of the team, including medics that may potentially support your mission. The training should not only include “this is where you place the catheter” but more importantly, “this is how you unhook my lanyard” or “this is how you remove the dog’s vest”.