

METRO NEWS

Dog Enters House, Attacks Comatose Woman

■ **Tragedy:** Animal, which does not live at the residence, came through pet door and chewed on woman's foot, officials say. Victim is hospitalized in serious condition; the dog has not been found.

By JULIE TAMAKI
TIMES STAFF WRITER

In a grotesque attack, a dog entered a Sun Valley home through a "doggie door" Sunday and viciously chewed the foot of a comatose woman who was being cared for by relatives, police and other officials said.

The victim, whose name was withheld by authorities, was taken to Holy Cross Medical Center and is in serious condition, said Jim

Wells, a spokesman for the Los Angeles Fire Department.

According to police, the victim, described only as a woman in her 30s, had been in a deep coma for several years.

The bizarre attack occurred about 11:30 a.m. Sunday at a house in the 9900 block of Maude Avenue.

Authorities said a dog that lives at the house left through the pet door. Later, another animal—a large black dog that does not live there—entered through the doorway and attacked the woman. The

woman's mother managed to scare the dog away, but not before it devoured most of the woman's foot, authorities said.

Los Angeles police joined officials from the East Valley Animal Shelter in searching for the black dog, which had not been found as of late Sunday. Police described the dog, possibly a Rottweiler, as black with some brown markings on its face.

Wells said the attack is a harsh reminder that pet doors can be used by intruders—human or animal—to gain entry into homes.

"The public needs to be aware that these things can happen and that we constantly need to safeguard our families and our homes," Wells said.

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BRIEFLY

Comatose woman attacked by dog

SUNLAND — A large black dog snuck through a doggie-door in a Sunland home Sunday morning and attacked a comatose woman, police said.

The woman's foot was severely bitten before a family member stopped the attack and chased the dog out of the house, said police in the Foothill Division of the Los Angeles Police Department. The woman was taken to a hospital by ambulance.

The attack occurred about 11:30 a.m. in the 9900 block of Maude Avenue. Police and animal control officers continued to look for the dog later Sunday.

According to the American Humane Association, more than 4.5 million dog bites are reported to health officials each year and approximately 650,000 of those go unreported. Additionally, dog bite claims cost insurance companies about \$1 billion annually.

— Daily News