

Rabies, in animals

Community Case Definition

An animal that is behaving as:

- Aggressive, possibly trying to bite humans, or other animals, or objects;

AND 1 + of the following;

- Excessive uncontrolled hyperactivity or excessive drooling (salivating)
- Fear of light or fear of water

How it is spread

- The saliva, bites or scratches from an infected animal.
- Dogs and bats are the most common source.

Key messages

- Vaccination of dogs, cats and livestock is the best prevention.
- Children need to know about animal safety – stay away from stray dogs, aggressive and wild animals.
- Stay away from animals that are behaving in a strange way, do not play with wild animals.
- Rabies can affect all animals - domestic, livestock and wild animals.
- Seek treatment quickly if bitten or scratched by an animal.

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Actions during alerts and epidemics

- Community-Based Surveillance (CBS) alert reports.
- Provide first aid: If a person is bitten or scratched by an animal, wash the wound immediately and very thoroughly with soap and water. Flush the wound for minimum 15 minutes. Wash the wound in iodine solution.
- Take a bitten person to a health facility immediately – fast access to post-exposure vaccination can stop the disease.
- Report the location of dangerous animals to the local animal control or veterinary workers.
- Stay away from the suspected animal, do not try to catch or control the animal.
- Raise awareness in the community to avoid sick animals, and teach what to do if they are bitten.