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Rabies Disease



- **RABIES IS A DEADLY DISEASE**
- **HELP US IN THE BATTLE**
- **VACCINATE YOUR PETS**

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RABIES IS A DEADLY DISEASE - HELP US IN THE BATTLE – VACCINATE YOUR PETS

What is rabies?

Rabies is a disease that affects the brain and leads to the death of the person or animal involved.

Symptoms of a rabid animal

Symptoms can vary widely. The most common signs are:

- * Behavioural changes
- * Aggresiveness
- * Salivation
- * Paralysis

How is rabies transmitted?

The disease is mainly transmitted by the bite of an infected animal as the virus is found in the saliva of a rabid animal.

- * Never touch or caress a strange, injured animal or one which appears to be sick!!!

Which animals can become victims of rabies and also transmit the disease to humans and other animals?

All warm blooded animals can contract and then transmit rabies. The most common species in South Africa that can become infected are:

- * **Pets**, e.g dogs, cats, horses
- * **Livestock**, e.g cattle, goats, sheep
- * **Wild animals**, e.g black – backed jackal, bat –eared fox

How to control rabies

- * Vaccinate your dogs and cats. Encourage other people to have their pets vaccinated too.
- * Do not allow your pets to roam the streets

- * Report all suspect cases to your nearest state veterinarian, animal health technician or to the police
- * Pet owners are compelled by law (Animal Diseases Act 35 of 1984) to ensure that their dogs and cats are vaccinated at 3 months of age against rabies, repeated within 12 months (first booster) and then every 3 years (follow up booster). The pet's vaccination booklet should accompany the animal when travelling.

What to do if bitten?

- * Wash wound well for at least 5 minutes with water and soap
- * Immediately consult a medical practitioner
- * Do not wait for symptoms (headaches and fever, muscle pains, fear of water, mental disorder, difficult swallowing, paralysis, vomiting, profuse salivation, hoarse voice, irritability, anxiety etc) to develop
- * There is no effective treatment for humans or animals once symptoms of rabies develop.