

## A Brief Note on Rabies

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### Commentary

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### DESCRIPTION

Rabies is a disease found in dogs, foxes, wolves, hyenas, and, in some places, it is a disease of bats which feed on blood. The disease is passed to other animals or to people if they are bitten by an animal with rabies. Rabies pathogens live in the saliva of sick (rabies) animals. This is a fatal disease, this is a killer disease but not every dog which bites is infected with rabies.

When a rabid animal bites another animal or human, the bacteria that live in saliva enter the body through the bitten wound. The germs travel along the nerves to the brain. The time between the bite and the first appearance of signs that the bitten animal or human has been infected can take from 2 to 10 weeks or more. The time it takes depends on distance of the bite from the brain. If the bite is on the face or head, the bitten animal or human will show signs immediately, but if the bite is on the leg it will take much longer for signs to develop.

### GENERAL SIGNS OF RABIES

1. You should first look for bites and find out when and where the animal was bitten. All rabid animals initially show similar signs.
2. They change their normal behavior and behave very strangely.
3. They stop eating or drinking.
4. Male animal will try to mate (mount) other animals.
5. There is no change in the body temperature.

### RABIES IN THE DOG

1. Dogs show either of the two types of rabies.
2. Dogs with the quiet or mild nature of illness cannot move. There is a bone in the mouth and saliva seems to be dripping from the mouth.

3. Rabies in dogs lasts about 10 days before the animal dies. If the animal does not die after this time, you cannot suffer from rabies.

### **RABIES IN SHEEP, GOATS AND CATTLE**

Rabies is characterized by the fact that animals are restless and excited. When chewed, saliva drips from the mouth. The most important sign of a cow is that the animal screams very often with strange sounds, so animals gets paralyzed and die.

Horses show the angry (mad) type of the disease. It will kick and bite and show signs similar to colic. Animals die after paralysis of the back legs.

In the camel the signs of rabies are similar to those shown by an animal in the rut.

What to do with a biting dog: Remember that not every dog which bites has. If the dog belongs to somebody ask the owner about normal behavior. If the dog showing signs of rabies, you should notify your veterinarian immediately. The dog must be shot and if someone bites it, it must be immediately taken to the hospital for vaccination.

### **CONTROL OF RABIES**

Dogs in your area can be vaccinated against rabies. Ask your veterinarian about rabies vaccination. In the event of rabies, local livestock can also be vaccinated.

### **TREATMENT**

Leaves of *Achyranthes aspera* 100 gm and onion 50 gm are ground well and smeared over the bitten place. The extract of these ingredients is administered orally twice in a day.