Rabies in Virginia

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Overview

Rabies Virus → Rabies and Wild Animals → Human Rabies Cases → NDPH and Rabies → How to Protect Yourself
**Rabies Virus**

**Bullet shaped RNA Virus**

**Variants**
- Bat
- Raccoon
Wildlife Reservoirs
How it Spreads

- Bite of an infected animal
- Transmission of Saliva or Nervous Tissue
- NOT Blood, Urine, or Feces

How it Spreads
Mode of Action

- Virus Travels along Nerves
- Enters the Brain
- Virus Enter Salivary Glands
- Virus is Shed Through Saliva
- Virus is Shed Through Saliva
Flu-like Symptoms

Hallucinations, Disorientation, Insomnia

Hydrophobia - Hypersalivation

Partial Paralysis

Signs and Symptoms
• Average 3 cases per year in the United States
• Bat variant accounts for 70% of human cases
• Majority of human cases have no documented animal bite
• Almost always fatal
• Very few have survived
• Milwaukee Protocol – Induced Coma

Human Rabies Cases
Rabies in Virginia

- 2009 (dog) - Imported
- 2003 (raccoon) – Northern Virginia man
- 1998 (bat) – Inmate at correctional facility
• All dogs, cats, and ferrets, four months of age are required to be vaccinated against rabies

• All animal exposures (bite or scratch, contact with saliva) are to be reported to the local health department

Rabies Prevention Laws
Bite/Exposure is reported to Local Health Department or Animal Control

Animal responsible for exposure is located

Animal is placed under 10 day quarantine

HD observes the animal at the end of the quarantine period for signs of rabies

Healthy animals are released from quarantine

Exposed person is notified by health department that the animal is considered “free of rabies” at the time the exposure occurred.

Health Department Investigation
- Vaccinated Dog or Cat exposed to a wild potentially rabid animal
  - 45 Day Quarantine
- Unvaccinated Dog or Cat exposed to a wild potentially rabid animal
  - 6 month Strict Isolation Quarantine

If the animal is available for testing, quarantine length will be determined by lab results.

**Domestic Animal vs. Wild Animal**
• Any potentially rabid animal involved in a human or domestic animal exposure that cannot be quarantined, can be tested for rabies.
• Animal must be involved in an exposure to warrant testing.
• Investigate approximately 500 animal exposures each year
• Average 1-3 animals test positive for rabies annually.
  • Raccoon
  • Fox
  • Cat

Rabies in Norfolk
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Rabies Prevention Project (ORV)</th>
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<td>Began in Virginia in 2002</td>
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<td>Targets raccoons in the wild</td>
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<td>Baits impregnated with rabies vaccine</td>
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<td>Vaccination Zone from Alabama to Maine</td>
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<td>Designed to prevent the spread of raccoon rabies west</td>
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How to Protect against Rabies

Do not feed wildlife

Do not approach, touch, or handle sick or injured wildlife.

Ensure all pets are up to date on their rabies vaccinations.

Report all animal exposures to the Health Department and seek medical attention.
Thank you