

How can I protect myself from rabies?

- Do not feed, touch or adopt wild animals and be cautious of stray dogs and cats.
- Teach children to leave wildlife alone and tell an adult if an animal bites or scratches them.
- Tightly close garbage cans or store them in a garage/barn. Open trash attracts wild/stray animals.
- Don't handle or treat sick animals.
- Call your health care provider if an animal bites or scratches you.
- Promptly report animal incidents to the Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region, (719) 473-1741.

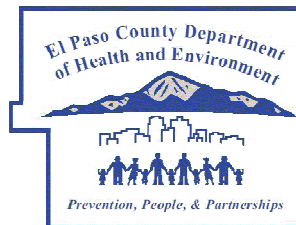
How can I protect my pet from rabies?

- Keep rabies vaccinations up-to-date for all cats, ferrets and dogs.
- Maintain control of your pets by keeping cats and ferrets indoors and keeping dogs under direct supervision when outdoors.
- Spay or neuter pets, pets that are spayed are less likely to leave home, become strays and make more stray animals.
- Call your medical provider for advice if an animal bites or scratches you.
- Promptly report animal bites to the Humane Society.



Is rabies a worldwide concern?

- Rabies is a big problem in Asia, Africa and Central and South America.
- In the United States, rabies cases in animals have been reported in every state except Hawaii.



This pamphlet was produced by the
El Paso County Department of Health & Environment
301 S. Union Blvd. Colorado Springs, CO 80910
(719) 578-3220
www.elpasocountyhealth.org

Facts about Rabies

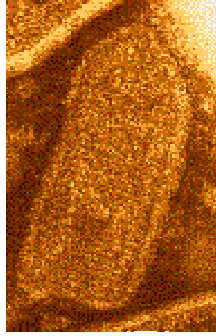


**EL PASO COUNTY DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT**

***“Protecting and Promoting Public
Health and Environmental Quality in
the Community through People,
Prevention and Partnerships”***

What is rabies?

Rabies is a virus that affects the central nervous system of mammals, causing a fatal inflammation of the brain and spinal cord. The rabies virus is shed in the saliva of an infected animal and is transmitted mainly through bites. It also is possible to get the virus through the introduction of saliva into an open wound, cut or mucous membrane, such as the eyes, nose or mouth.

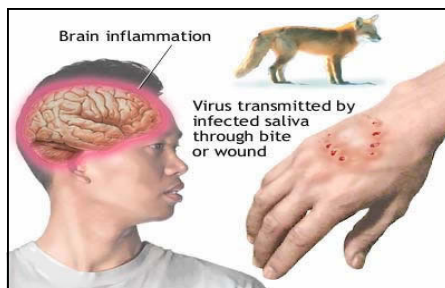


Who can get rabies?

Any mammal, such as raccoons, skunks, foxes, bats, dogs and cats, can get rabies. Cattle and humans also can get rabies. Snakes, birds and fish are animals that do **not** get rabies.

How do people get rabies?

Usually, people contract rabies through the bite of an infected animal. It is rare for people to get rabies from the saliva or infectious material of an infected animal getting directly into the eyes, nose, mouth or a wound.



Rabies is **not** spread through contact with urine, stool or blood of an infected animal. You cannot get rabies simply by petting an animal.

Domestic dogs, cats or ferrets that bite a human should be put in confinement for a 10 day observation period to determine whether the animal is suffering from symptoms of rabies. If a dog, cat or ferret remains alive and healthy during the 10 days after biting someone, then the animal does not have rabies. The 10-day observation period applies ONLY to domestic dogs, cats and ferrets.

Rabies in animals

“Furious” rabies

- Hostility
- Increase in saliva
- Biting at objects
- General sickness

“Dumb” rabies

- Timid or shy
- Rejects food
- Paralysis of the lower jaw and muscles

Rabies in Humans

Rabies is a fatal disease with progressive symptoms. Once people start to develop the symptoms, they almost always die. Therefore, it is very important to inform your health care provider right away if you have been bitten by an animal that might have rabies. After being exposed to rabies, symptoms may start as early as 30-90 days later, or could occur several years later.

Symptoms of rabies in humans may include:

- Pain or tingling at the site of the bite.
- Hallucinations—seeing things that aren't really there.
- Hydrophobia—a fear of water caused by spasms of the throat.
- Paralysis of body parts.



What treatment do I need if I am exposed to rabies?

The first step to decrease the chances for infection is to immediately wash the wound with soap and water. There also is preventive medication available to treat persons who have been exposed to rabies—which is called post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). In the United States, rabies PEP is a regimen of one dose of immune globulin and five doses of rabies vaccine given over a one-month period. Rabies PEP must be given by a health care provider as soon as possible after exposure.