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FACTS ABOUT RABIES



1 DEADLY VIRAL ILLNESS

Rabies is a viral illness. This means that when a person is infected with rabies, from an animal bite, viral particles enter and multiply inside the person's body. This is one of the most deadly viruses in the world, killing an estimated 59,000 people each year.

2 RARE IN THE USA

Rabies virus is rare in the United States thanks to vaccination of animals (cats, dogs, etc.) that humans come into contact with most often. Some wildlife, however, have a higher risk of carrying and spreading rabies to humans, usually through bites or scratches.

3 WILD ANIMALS TO WATCH OUT FOR

In the United States, the most common animals you may come into contact with that have a higher risk of carrying rabies include **foxes, skunks, raccoons, and bats**.

If you encounter any of these animals, do not approach or interact with them. Call a pest control service or exterminator to handle the animal safely.

4 WHAT TO DO IF BITTEN

If you are bitten by an animal that may carry the rabies virus **immediately** go to the nearest emergency department and inform them that you may have been exposed to an animal with rabies. They will ask for a history of what happened to determine your risk of having contracted the virus and may run additional tests.

5 TREATMENTS

There is a vaccine for rabies that can be administered to patients who have been bitten and deemed at high risk of having contracted the virus.

The vaccine will be given in several doses over a period of weeks. The health care team will assist in monitoring your condition and keeping wounds clean.

6 WHY CAN'T I GET A VACCINE NOW?

The rabies vaccine is expensive, averaging \$3,800 for a full course of post-bite care. Most people do not need pre-bite vaccination unless they work with animals (veterinarians) or travel to areas of the world with high risk of encountering animals with the virus.

<https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/location/usa/cost.html>;
https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/medical_care/index.html;
<https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html>

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