
 Public Information Toolkit
for Rabies Prevention

Version 2, October 2023



Developed 2023

The core development group included Yasmeen Ross, Amarachi Metu, Susanna MacKenna, Lauren Wilson, Emily Davenport, Christine Pearson, and Ryan Wallace (US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), Chilufya Mulenga (Zambia Public Health Institute), and Katy Cronin (Oshun Partnership).

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For additional resources, please visit:

- [WHO Expert Consultation on Rabies: WHO TRS N°1012](#)
- [WOAH Terrestrial Code](#)
- [United Against Rabies Forum](#)

Public Information Toolkit	1
for Rabies Prevention	1
Overview	4
Purpose of this Toolkit.....	4
How to Use this Toolkit.....	6
General Press Release Guidelines.....	6
Rabies Deaths in People	8
Talking Points.....	8
Press Release.....	8
Social Media.....	9
Rabid Animals	11
Talking Points.....	11
Press Release.....	12
Social Media.....	12
Mass Rabies Exposures and Outbreaks	14
Talking Points.....	14
Press Release – Mass Rabies Exposure.....	15
Press Release – Rabies Outbreak.....	16
Social Media.....	16
Bite Prevention	18
Talking Points.....	18
Press Release.....	19
Social Media.....	20
General Rabies Awareness	21
Talking Points.....	21
Press Release.....	22
Social Media.....	23
Image Library	24



Overview

Rabies is a deadly viral disease that is transmitted to humans through the saliva of infected animals, most commonly when a rabid dog scratches or bites a person or another animal. Once rabies symptoms develop, the disease is almost always fatal.

Key elements of any successful rabies control program are access to vaccines for people, mass dog vaccination and public education. By educating community members on the risk of rabies and how to prevent it, we can help people make informed decisions about seeking medical attention if they have been bitten or scratched by an animal, as well as how to behave safely around animals, especially dogs. An effective communications plan from a reputable source, such as relevant government agencies or ministries of health, can help save many thousands of lives by urging people to wash wounds as first aid, seek medical advice, dispel rabies misconceptions, increase awareness of the importance of dog vaccination, and promote responsible pet ownership, ultimately contributing to the overall health and safety of the community.

To help you communicate important information about rabies in your region, the United Against Rabies (UAR) Forum has developed this document, in collaboration with the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Zambia Public Health Institute (ZNPFI). The goal of this toolkit is to provide sample communication materials that can be tailored to specific rabies situations in communities. For example, this toolkit can be used to create social media posts, press releases, and other public information materials such as posters and radio messages. Due to the diverse and often complex nature of rabies exposures, not all scenarios can be covered in this toolkit. However, this toolkit covers some of the most common types of rabies events and messages that are most often needed for community education. While rabies outbreaks and human deaths are unfortunate, they offer opportunities for outreach to affected populations.

Purpose of this Toolkit

This toolkit is designed for human and animal health authorities to:

- ❖ Inform the public about rabies outbreaks and encourage them to report any suspected rabies cases in animals or people to the correct health authorities to prevent further infections.
- ❖ Explain how rabies spreads, and that the only way to stop infection it is through a full course of injections (PEP) as soon as possible after an exposure before symptoms begin.
- ❖ Urge people to go to a clinic if bitten or scratched by a dog or other animal, and to take a full course of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) if the clinician advises them to.
- ❖ Urge responsible pet ownership and promote vaccination of free roaming dogs to stop the spread of rabies.

How to Use this Toolkit

The information included in this document should be used by appropriate government or ministry officials to provide information about rabies to the community. This toolkit provides templates for press releases, talking points, and social media content to disseminate information through multiple communication channels. Press releases, which are short communication memos, can be easily adapted and disseminated via government websites or through news outlets. Common, high-level talking points are included to facilitate clear communication when discussing rabies topics so that messaging is consistent with global prevention and treatment recommendations and available scientific literature. Lastly, the toolkit includes example social media posts that can be adapted and used across multiple platforms from your official government or ministry accounts. While each platform has its own characteristics and audience, you should consider where your intended audience spends most of their time, how they most often get news and information, and which platform suits the needs of the messages you are trying to convey. All templates and resources provided here are intended to be modified to reflect the local epidemiology of rabies and rabies prevention guidance in your area.

When planning effective messaging after a rabies event, clear concise educational messaging should be tailored to the event and the goals of the Agency preparing the materials (i.e., informing communities about the need for alerting health officials and conducting contact tracing after a rabid animal is found). Based on the situation, select the most relevant messaging categories for your location and intended audience.

General Press Release Guidelines

Effective communication during rabies events hinges on timely and clear press releases. These official statements are pivotal in informing the community and stakeholders. Start with a compelling headline and photograph, followed by a structured, easily understood body that aligns with global recommendations and local data. Then distribute the press release through various channels such as social media, official website, and newspaper articles. Officials should compile a list of local news outlets including TV stations, radio stations, and online publications. Use this list when it is time to disseminate your information. Press releases, along with the templates in this toolkit, empower government and ministry officials to deliver consistent, actionable information during rabies events.

RESOURCES



Rabies Deaths in People

The examples below can help increase awareness of the risk of rabies in people. Use this section when someone dies of rabies in your community.

Talking Points

- ❖ Rabies is a fatal but preventable disease caused by a virus. It can spread to people and animals if they are bitten or scratched by a rabid animal.
- ❖ The most common way people get rabies is after having close contact with a rabid animal. The virus does not normally spread between people. The only documented spread between people has been through rabies-infected organ/tissue donors to transplant recipients.
- ❖ While people with rabies can spread the virus to people, these events are very rare; with simple precautions, family, friends, and healthcare providers should rarely require PEP.
- ❖ Rabies virus is spread through direct contact with infectious tissue or body fluids. Rabies virus is not transmitted through contaminated objects or materials such as clothes or bedding.
- ❖ While rabies is a 100% preventable disease, nearly 60,000 people die from the disease around the world each year, many of whom are children under the age of 15.
- ❖ Rabies can be prevented after a potential exposure, like a bite or scratch, by thoroughly washing the wound with soap and water for 10-15 minutes and immediately seeking medical care. A doctor may recommend post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), which includes thoroughly washing the wound again, a series of rabies vaccinations, and sometimes a shot of rabies immunoglobulin. Immunoglobulin is given once at the beginning of PEP to people who have never been vaccinated to provide immediate antibodies until the body can respond to the vaccine. These shots are considered safe, effective, and relatively painless, similar to routine vaccines that are given to children.
- ❖ If anyone in the community has experienced a rabies exposure, they should seek medical care and consultation immediately.

Press Release

Headline Examples: *Provide one sentence about the event.*

- ❖ “Rabies Claims [PERSON/CHILD]'S Life Following [EXPOSURE DETAILS]”
- ❖ “Rabies Tragedy Strikes: [PERSON/CHILD]'S Death Sparks Awareness Push”
- ❖ “[GOVERNMENT] Warns Community of Risk of Rabies After Another Human Rabies Death”

-
- ❖ “Beware of [SPECIES] After Recent Rabies Death in [LOCATION]
 - ❖ “[PERSON/CHILD] Dies of Rabies, Highlights Preventable Threat”
 - ❖ “[LOCATION] Reports 1st Human Rabies Death This Year, Stark Reminder to Use Caution about Animals”

Body of the article: *This section should include details about the animal, the human victim, and what events led to the bite.*

A [PERSON/CHILD] has died from rabies after [DETAILS ON EXPOSURE EVENT – such as species of animal, behavior of animal, type of exposure, location of exposure].

The [PERSON/CHILD] died on [DATE] at [LOCATION] hospital.

Rabies is a fatal but preventable viral disease. It can spread to people, pets, and livestock if they are bitten or scratched by a rabid animal. The [rabies virus](#) infects the central nervous system (spinal cord and brain). If a person does not receive timely and [appropriate medical care](#) after they are bitten or scratched by a potentially rabid animal (called a [potential rabies exposure](#)), the virus can cause disease in the brain, leading to death. There is no treatment as soon as symptoms appear, but washing the wound for 10-15min with soap and water after exposure and receiving a series of rabies vaccination can prevent the disease.

Dogs are the main source of rabies deaths in people, contributing to up to 99% of all rabies deaths in people worldwide each year. While you cannot tell an animal has rabies just by looking at it and rabid animals can infect humans before they start showing symptoms, animals with rabies may act strangely. Some things to look for are general sickness, problems swallowing, excessive drool or saliva, being overly aggressive, biting at imaginary objects, an animal that appears tamer than you would expect, an animal that is having trouble moving or is paralyzed, or a bat on the ground. If you see a strange acting animal in your community, inform [NAME/INSTITUTION/CONTACT DETAILS].

If you believe you’ve been potentially exposed to a rabid animal, you should wash the wound with soap and water for 10-15 minutes as first aid and seek medical care as soon as possible. Your healthcare provider will decide if your exposure is a risk for rabies. If so, you will get a series of rabies vaccinations, and possibly rabies antibodies. These actions could save your life.

Sources:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html>
- https://www.who.int/health-topics/rabies#tab=tab_1

Social Media

Hashtags:

- #Rabies
- #1Health4Rabies
- #ZeroBy30
- #UnitedAgainstRabies
- #InternationalRabiesTaskForce
- #RabiesPrevention

Example Post:

- ❖ In [LOCATION], [PERSON/CHILD] has died due to rabies from [ANIMAL EXPOSURE].

-
- ❖ [NUMBER OF DOG BITES] dog bites have been reported so far in [YEAR]. Bites from dogs contribute to up to 99% of all rabies spread to people. If you have been scratched or bitten by a dog and have not sought care, please contact [CONTACT INFORMATION].
 - ❖ [PERSON/CHILD] has lost their life to rabies after [Exposure Details]. Let's turn this tragedy into a call for action. Educate yourself, protect your loved ones, and remember that early medical intervention is crucial.
 - ❖ Saddened to hear about the loss of [PERSON/CHILD], who lost their life to rabies after [EXPOSURE DETAILS]. This serves as a poignant reminder that rabies is a real threat. Let's ensure everyone knows how to respond if they or their loved ones face a potential exposure.
 - ❖ Washing your wound with soap and water and seeking medical treatment after an animal scratch or bite could save your life! After a rabies exposure, a series of rabies vaccinations and possibly rabies antibodies could be the lifesaving treatment you need to prevent rabies.
 - ❖ Help us create a rabies-free community in memory of those who have lost their lives due to this tragic disease. Join our Dog Vaccination Campaign on [DATE] at [LOCATION]. Let's prevent rabies together!
 - ❖ Your dog's health matters now more than ever. Our free vaccination clinic is happening on [DATE] at [LOCATION] as a response to the recent rabies tragedy. See you there!



Rabid Animals

The examples below can help to notify community members that they may have had contact with a rabid animal or that they should use increased caution around animals. Use this section when:

- There is a confirmed rabid animal that was found in a highly populated area.
- There is a sudden increase in the number of reported rabid animals in an area.
- You heard reports of community members interacting with the potentially rabid animal.
- Contact tracing is needed to identify other community members who may require medical treatment.

Talking Points

- Animals with rabies can infect livestock, other wild animals, or unvaccinated pets. Maintain control of your pets and keep dogs under direct supervision when they are outside.
- The best way to prevent your pets from getting rabies is by keeping them up to date on vaccinations. Spay or neuter your pets to reduce the number of unwanted pets that may not be properly cared for or vaccinated.
- Be aware of wild animals or unfamiliar dogs that have unnatural behaviors, such as being aggressive, or that try to bite people or other animals.
- Leave wildlife alone.
- Know the risk: contact with infected dogs is the leading cause of rabies deaths in people.
- If you see a sick or strange-acting animal, you should contact local authorities.
- Rabies can be prevented after a potential exposure, like a bite or scratch, by thoroughly washing the wound with soap and water for 10-15 minutes and immediately seeking medical care. A doctor may recommend post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), consisting of immediate and thorough washing of the wound, a series of rabies vaccinations and sometimes rabies immunoglobulin. Immunoglobulin is given once at the beginning of PEP to people who have never been vaccinated to provide immediate antibodies until the body can respond to the vaccine.
- If you are bitten, scratched, or unsure, talk to a healthcare provider about whether you need post-exposure prophylaxis to prevent rabies. Getting medical care quickly after having contact with a rabid animal could save your life.

Press Release

Headline Examples: *Provide one sentence on the event.*

- “ALERT! Rabies reported in [ANIMAL] in [LOCATION]”
- “Community on High Alert as Rabid Animals Have Been Detected in [LOCATION]”
- “Rabies Warning: Residents of [COMMUNITY NAME] Urged to Stay Vigilant After Rabid Animal Detected in Community”
- “Stay Safe: Rabid Animals Detected in [COMMUNITY NAME], Residents Should Notify “[AGENCY/ORGANIZATION] of Strange Acting Animals”
- “[AGENCY/ORGANIZATION] issues rabies alert for [LOCATION]”

Body of the article: *This section should include the type of rabid animal(s), their location, and advice on how to stay safe. If there are response activities such as a dog vaccination drive occurring, be sure to include that information in the article.*

The [AGENCY/ORGANIZATION] has issued a rabies alert for [LOCATION/AREAS]. This alert follows a discovery of a [OR NUMBER OF ANIMALS] rabid [ANIMAL] in [LOCATION/AREAS]. Rabies can also be a risk outside of this location.

Be aware of wild animals that are unusually friendly or have unnatural behaviors, such as being aggressive and trying to bite people or other animals. Rabid animals may also drool more than normal. An animal with rabies could infect other wild animals, livestock or pets that haven’t received rabies vaccine. Avoid getting close to wild animals, specifically [LIST ANIMALS IN LOCATION/AREAS].

Proceed with caution. Always maintain control of your pets and livestock. Be sure that each pet has current rabies vaccine shots from a licensed veterinarian and avoid allowing pets to roam around freely

The [rabies virus](#) infects the central nervous system. If a person does not receive timely and [appropriate medical care](#) after a [potential rabies exposure](#), the virus can cause disease in the brain. This will lead to death. Rabies can be prevented by vaccinating pets, staying away from wild animals. After a potential exposure, wash wounds thoroughly with soap and water and go to a clinic before symptoms start.

If you believe you’ve possibly had contact with a rabid animal, wash your wound with soap and water for 10–15 minutes and seek medical care as soon as possible. Your healthcare provider will decide if you need a series of rabies vaccinations, and possibly rabies antibodies. These actions could save your life.

Sources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html>

https://www.who.int/health-topics/rabies#tab=tab_1

Social Media

Hashtags:

#Rabies

#1Health4Rabies

#ZeroBy30

#UnitedAgainstRabies

#InternationalRabiesTaskForce

#RabiesPrevention

Example Post:

- ❖ Health authorities are warning of rabies in [LOCATION/AREAS]. This alert follows a discovery of a rabid [ANIMAL] in [LOCATION/AREAS or “the area”]. Rabies can also occur outside of this location. Avoid getting close to wild animals, specifically [LIST ANIMALS IN LOCATION/AREAS].
- ❖ Health authorities are warning of rabies in [LOCATION/AREAS]. This alert follows a discovery of a rabid [ANIMAL] in [LOCATION/AREAS or “the area”]. Always maintain control of your pets. Be sure that each pet has current rabies vaccine shots from a licensed veterinarian.
- ❖ [NUMBER] animals have tested positive for rabies in [COUNTY/DISTRICT/TOWN] this year. Always use caution around wild animals and dogs, which cause most rabies cases worldwide.
- ❖ [AGENCY] reports a higher than usual number of rabies cases in [LOCATION]. Please use caution around wildlife and stray animals to protect yourself and your pets.
- ❖ Rabies is almost always fatal. If you or your pet have been bitten or scratched by an animal, please contact [CONTACT INFORMATION]. You may need to receive life-saving rabies vaccinations and sometimes rabies immunoglobulin.



Mass Rabies Exposures and Outbreaks

The examples below are helpful to use proactively to prevent rabies deaths after multiple people were potentially exposed to the same animal or there is an outbreak of rabies. Be sure to communicate any response activities planned particularly if they require community support, such as dog vaccination. Use this section when:

- It is suspected that an animal had contact with multiple people while potentially rabid.
- There is an increase in the number of rabid animals in an area.

Talking Points

- ✦ If you see a sick or strange-acting animal, you should contact your local veterinary authority.
- ✦ Know the risk: dogs are the main source of rabies deaths in people, contributing to up to 99% of all rabies spread to humans.
- ✦ Rabies can be prevented after a potential exposure, like a bite or scratch, by thoroughly washing the wound with soap and water for 10-15 minutes and immediately seeking medical care. A doctor may recommend post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), which consists of immediate and thorough washing of the wound, a series of rabies vaccinations and sometimes rabies immunoglobulin. Immunoglobulin is given once at the beginning of PEP to people who have never been vaccinated to provide immediate antibodies until the body can respond to the vaccine.
- ✦ If you are bitten, scratched, or unsure, talk to a healthcare provider about whether you need treatment to prevent rabies. Rabies in people is 100% preventable through prompt appropriate medical care and PEP before symptoms start.
- ✦ Modern rabies vaccines are safe and effective. They can safely be used in pregnant and breastfeeding women.
- ✦ Wash any wounds immediately with soap and water for 10-15 minutes and then go see a healthcare provider. Do not apply any homemade remedies
- ✦ Please do not kill free roaming dogs. Notify authorities if there are dangerous animals in your community. Vaccinated free-roaming dogs protect the community from rabies; killing these dogs puts the community at more risk
- ✦ Communication about upcoming response activities such as dog vaccination campaigns.

Press Release – Mass Rabies Exposure

Headline Examples: *Provide one sentence about the event.*

- ❖ “Community on High Alert! A Rabid [SPECIES] Was Found in [LOCATION] Multiple People Exposed”
- ❖ “Have You Seen Me? A Rabid [SPECIES] Was Found in [LOCATION], if You Have Had Contact With This [SPECIES] Please Contact [AGENCY/ORGANIZATION]”
- ❖ "Community Health Alert: Possible Rabies Exposure - Have You Seen This Animal?"
- ❖ "Possible Rabies Threat: Did You Interact with This Animal? Your Information Can Help Save Your Life"

Body of the article: *This section should include details about the animal and the types of interactions reported.*

On [DATE], [AGENCY] was notified of a [ANIMAL SPECIES] found [LOCATION DETAILS]. It is reported that multiple community members may have [TYPES OF INTERACTION REPORTED] with this animal. The [SPECIES] was tested by [LAB/AGENCY] and was confirmed to have rabies. If you or someone you know had contact with this animal between [DATE RANGE], please contact [AGENCY] at [CONTACT INFORMATION] for a risk assessment. You may need to receive treatment to prevent rabies infection (called post-exposure prophylaxis).

Rabies can be a deadly disease if a person does not receive timely and [appropriate medical care](#) after contact with a rabid animal ([rabies exposure](#)). People usually get rabies from the bite of a rabid animal. It is also possible, but rare, for people to get rabies from other types of contact besides bites, such as scratches, abrasions, or open wounds that are exposed to saliva or other potentially infectious material like brain or nervous system tissue from a rabid animal. If you are unsure if you have had an exposure please contact your healthcare provider.

Press Release – Rabies Outbreak

Headline Examples: *Provide one sentence about the event.*

- ❖ “Community on High Alert as Multiple Rabid Animals Have Been Detected in [LOCATION]”
- ❖ "Rabies Warning: Residents of [COMMUNITY NAME] Urged to Stay Vigilant After [NUMBER] Rabid [SPECIES] Have Been Detected in Community"
- ❖ "Stay Safe: [NUMBER] Rabid Animals Detected in [COMMUNITY NAME], Residents Should Notify “[AGENCY/ORGANIZATION] of Strange Acting Animals”

Body of the article: *This section should include details about outbreak including communities at risk and who to contact in the event of an exposure.*

The [AGENCY/ORGANIZATION] warned the [COMMUNITY NAME] of a rabies outbreak near [LOCATION] on [DATE].

This is the [NUMBER] confirmed case of rabies in [COMMUNITY NAME] this year.

If you find an animal that you believe is rabid, you should immediately contact [AGENCY/ORGANIZATION] at [CONTACT INFORMATION].

Some animal behaviors too look out for include:

- ❖ General sickness
- ❖ Trouble swallowing
- ❖ Drooling or foaming at the mouth
- ❖ Over-aggression
- ❖ Biting at the air
- ❖ A wild animal acting more tame than usual

Rabid animals that have been found in the past include [LOCAL SPECIES THAT HAVE BEEN POSITIVE FOR RABIES]

The [rabies virus](#) infects the central nervous system. If a person does not receive timely and [appropriate medical care](#) after a [potential rabies exposure](#), the virus can cause disease in the brain. This will lead to death. Rabies can be prevented by vaccinating pets, staying away from wild animals. Go to a clinic after potential exposures and before symptoms start.

If you need assistance with finding medical care, please contact [AGENCY/ORGANIZATION] for more information.

Social Media

Hashtags:

#Rabies
#1Health4Rabies
#ZeroBy30
#UnitedAgainstRabies
#InternationalRabiesTaskForce
#RabiesPrevention

Example Post:

- [AGENCY] reports a higher than usual number of rabies cases in [LOCATION]. Please use caution around wildlife and stray animals to protect yourself and your pets.
- Rabies is nearly always fatal but infection can be prevented. If you or your pet have been bitten or scratched by an animal, please contact [CONTACT INFORMATION]. You may need to receive life-saving rabies vaccinations and sometimes rabies antibodies.
- Spot a sick or strange-acting animal? Contact [RABIES POINT OF CONTACT]. Rabies prevention starts with responsible actions and awareness. Let's keep our communities safe for both humans and pets!
- ALERT! Residents of [COMMUNITY NAME] urged to stay vigilant after [NUMBER] of rabid animal detected in community. If you see an animal behaving strangely, do not approach it! Instead contact [AGENCY/ORGANIZATION] at [CONTACT INFORMATION].



Bite Prevention

The examples below are helpful to use proactively to prevent rabies exposures. Use this section when:

- There is an increase in dog bites locally.
- Seasonal changes in your area mean people are more likely to encounter dogs or bring new dogs into the home.
- Annually on World Rabies Day (September 28th).

Talking Points

- ❖ Dogs are the main source of rabies deaths in people, contributing to up to 99% of all rabies spread to humans. Rabies can be prevented by vaccinating dogs and preventing dog bites.
- ❖ If you see a sick or strange-acting animal, you should contact your local veterinary authority.
- ❖ Any dog can bite, especially when scared, nervous, eating, playing or when protecting toys or puppies. Dogs may also bite when they aren't feeling well.
- ❖ Children are more likely than adults to be bitten by a dog, and when they are, the injuries can be more severe. Most dog bites affecting young children occur during everyday activities and while interacting with familiar dogs.
- ❖ People who have a dog in their household have a higher likelihood of being bitten than those who don't have a dog. As the number of dogs in a home increases, so does the likelihood of being bitten.
- ❖ Adults with two or more dogs in the household are five times more likely to be bitten than those living without dogs at home. Among adults, men are more likely than women to be bitten by a dog.
- ❖ Any dog can bite, but most dog bites are preventable. There are many things you can do at home and within your community to help prevent dog bites.
- ❖ Don't approach unfamiliar dogs. Always ask before petting someone's dog.
- ❖ Don't inflict pain on dogs or disturb dogs that are eating, sleeping, or caring for puppies.
- ❖ Be a responsible pet owner – train and socialize your dog, avoid allowing your dog to roam freely without supervision, keep it on leash in public, and take it to the veterinarian regularly.
 - Teach kids how to interact with dogs safely. Always supervise kids around dogs, even trusted pets.

-
- If you have contact with a confirmed or suspected rabid dog, rabies is 100% preventable through prompt appropriate medical care. If you are bitten, scratched, or unsure, talk to a healthcare provider as soon as you can.
 - Pre-exposure prophylaxis (vaccination before contact with a potentially rabid animal) may be considered for people who work with animals.

Press Release

Headline Examples: *Provide one sentence about the event or bite prevention message.*

- ❖ Public Warned of Increase in Dog Bites In [LOCATION]
- ❖ A Healthy, Happy Dog Is Less Likely to Bite
- ❖ Stop Rabies by Avoiding Dog Bites.

Body of the article: *This section should include information about preventing rabies exposures in humans through maintaining healthy dogs and preventing dog bites.*

Dog bites are not only painful and upsetting, but they can also cause injury and infection. Nearly 1 in 5 people bitten by a dog requires medical attention.

Dog bites are the main source of rabies deaths in people, contributing to up to 99% of all rabies spread to people. The best way to prevent dogs from spreading rabies to people is to vaccinate them. Be a responsible pet owner by taking the following steps:

- ❖ Train and socialize your dog,
- ❖ Avoid allowing your dog to roam without supervision, keep it on leash in public,
- ❖ Take it to the veterinarian regularly,
- ❖ Ensure vaccinations are up to date.

People who have a dog in their household have a higher likelihood of being bitten than those who don't have a dog. As the number of dogs in your home increases, so does the likelihood of being bitten. Men are at higher risk for dog bites than women, and children are more likely than adults to be bitten.

Remember, any dog can bite, especially when they are scared, nervous, playing with toys. Dogs may also bite when they aren't feeling well. Avoid approaching unfamiliar dogs, and always ask before petting someone else's dog. Do not disturb dogs that are eating, sleeping, or caring for puppies. Teach kids how to interact with dogs safely and to not inflict pain on them. Always supervise kids around dogs, even trusted pets.

If you do have contact with a rabid dog, protect yourself from rabies by washing the wound thoroughly with soap and water for 10-15 minutes and seeking prompt medical care. If you are bitten, scratched, or unsure, talk to a healthcare provider right away to determine if preventive measures are needed. If you are unsure who you should talk to, contact [AGENCY/ORGANIZATION] for more information.

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (vaccination before contact with a potentially rabid animal) may be considered for people who work with animals.

Social Media

Hashtags:

#Rabies

#1Health4Rabies

#ZeroBy30

#UnitedAgainstRabies

#InternationalRabiesTaskForce

#RabiesPrevention

Example Post:

- #DoYouKnow what to do if you're scratched or bitten by a dog? Immediately wash the wound for 10-15 minutes with soap and running water. Then, consult your doctor about rabies vaccinations. Rabies is 99% fatal but 100% preventable with timely and appropriate care. Find out more here → <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/rabies/>
- #DoYouKnow that dog bites are the main cause of rabies deaths in people? Prevent bites! Don't approach unfamiliar dogs, and always ask before petting someone's dog. Don't disturb dogs that are eating, sleeping, or caring for puppies. Always supervise kids around dogs.
- Spot a sick or strange-acting animal? Contact [RABIES POINT OF CONTACT]. Rabies prevention starts with responsible actions and awareness. Let's keep our communities safe for both humans and pets!
- Did you know? Most dog bites are preventable. Simple steps like asking before petting, not disturbing dogs at certain times, and responsible ownership can go a long way. Let's create a safer environment for everyone!



General Rabies Awareness

The examples below are helpful to use proactively to prevent rabies deaths. Use this section when:

- There is an increase in rabies in animals or people locally.
- Seasonal changes in your area mean people are more likely to be outdoors or come into contact with animals.
- Annually on World Rabies Day (September 28th).

Talking Points

- ❖ Rabies is a fatal but preventable viral disease. A rabid animal can spread the virus to people, pets, and livestock if they are bitten or scratched. An animal can already spread rabies before showing the first signs of disease.
- ❖ While rabies is a 100% preventable disease, nearly 60,000 people die from the disease around the world each year, many of whom are children under the age of 15.
- ❖ If you do not receive the appropriate medical care after a potential rabies exposure, the virus can cause disease in the brain. Once this occurs, death is inevitable and there is no treatment for rabies.
- ❖ Rabies can be prevented after a potential exposure, like a bite or scratch, by thoroughly washing the wound with soap and water and immediately seeking medical care. Your doctor may recommend post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) consisting of thoroughly washing the wound again, a series of rabies vaccinations, and sometimes rabies immunoglobulin. Immunoglobulin is given once at the beginning of PEP to people who have never been vaccinated to provide immediate antibodies until the body can respond to the vaccine. If you have been already vaccinated against rabies before in your life, you need only fewer injections, but you should still search medical care.
- ❖ Dogs are the main source of human rabies deaths, contributing up to 99% of all rabies transmissions to humans. Vaccinating dogs and preventing dog bites can stop the spread of rabies. Spaying and neutering pets and contacting authorities about stray animals or animals with unusual behavior can also help reduce the number of unvaccinated or ill animals.
- ❖ If you see a sick or strange acting animal, you should contact your local veterinary authority.
- ❖ Major health organizations including the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) are working together to eliminate rabies deaths in people that are caused by dogs by 2030.

-
- ❖ Avoiding wildlife and understanding the risk posed by local wild animals, such as bats, jackals, and foxes, can help reduce exposure to rabies. It is especially important to avoid interacting with animals that are behaving unusually, including livestock.
 - ❖ In some instances, pre-exposure prophylaxis should be considered for individuals who work with animals at risk for rabies, such as dogs and cats, or wildlife that may carry the disease.
 - ❖ Consumption of milk, milk products or cooked meat does not transmit rabies. However, it is not advised to consume products from rabid animals. Handling or consuming raw meat from infected animals might require PEP and healthcare advice should be sought.

Press Release

Headline Examples: *Provide one sentence on rabies prevention or a rabies event.*

- ❖ "Biting Back: The Global Fight Against Rabies"
- ❖ "From Fear to Freedom: The Path to Rabies-Free Communities"
- ❖ "It's Prime Rabies Season: Here's What to Do If You Get Bit"
- ❖ "Rabies: A Deadly Threat with Preventable Consequences"
- ❖ "Spotting Danger: Identifying Rabid Animals Crucial for Public Safety"
- ❖ "World Rabies Day: The Time to Prevent is Now"

Body of the article: *This section should include information about rabies, how to prevent it, and access to trustworthy sources (including those for reporting unusual animal behavior, getting access to vaccines, and getting more information about rabies prevention). If used after a rabies event, make sure to include specifics about who is at risk, what happened, when and where in the first paragraph.*

Rabies is a deadly but preventable disease that kills an estimated 60,000 people globally each year, many of whom are children.

Rabies can be prevented after a potential exposure, like a bite or scratch from a rabid animal, by thoroughly washing the wound for 10-15 minutes with soap and water and immediately seeking [appropriate medical care](#). If you are bitten, scratched, or unsure if you were, talk to a healthcare provider as soon as possible about whether you need post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). PEP, including immediate and thorough washing of the wound, a series of rabies vaccinations, and sometimes rabies immunoglobulin. Immunoglobulin is given once at the beginning of PEP to people who have never been vaccinated to provide immediate antibodies until the body can respond to the vaccine.

If a person does not receive the [appropriate medical care](#) after a [potential rabies exposure](#), the virus can cause disease in the brain, ultimately resulting in death.

Rabies exposures can also be prevented by avoiding suspicious animals and understanding the risk posed by unknown dogs and wild animals, such as [**LOCAL RESERVOIR SPECIES**] especially avoid animals that are behaving unusually, including allowing humans to get close to them.

Dogs are the main source of human rabies deaths, contributing up to 99% of all rabies transmissions to humans. Rabies can be prevented through timely and appropriate medical care, [vaccination of dogs, and prevention of dog bites](#). Spaying and neutering pets and contacting authorities about stray animals or animals with unusual behavior can also help reduce the number of unvaccinated or ill animals. Major health organizations including

the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations \(FAO\)](#) the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), the [World Organization for Animal Health \(WOAH\)](#), and they are working together to eliminate rabies deaths in people that are caused by dogs by 2030. These organizations are all members of [United Against Rabies](#) – a global platform for collaboration to end all human deaths from rabies.

In some instances, pre-exposure prophylaxis should be considered for individuals who work with animals at risk for rabies, such as dogs and cats, or wildlife that may carry the disease, such as bats.

You are essential for preventing rabies. Take steps today to protect your pets and yourself!

Social Media

Hashtags:

#Rabies

#1Health4Rabies

#ZeroBy30

#UnitedAgainstRabies

#InternationalRabiesTaskForce

#RabiesPrevention

Example Posts:

- ❖ #DoYouKnow what to do if you're bitten by a dog? Immediately wash the bite wound for 10-15 minutes with soap and running water. Then, consult your doctor about if you need vaccinations. Rabies is 99% fatal but 100% preventable. Find out more here → <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/rabies#ZeroBy30>
- ❖ IN [YEAR], [#] people died from rabies in [LOCATION]. Rabies is 99% fatal but 100% preventable. If potentially exposed, immediately wash the bite wound for 10-15 minutes with soap and running water. Then, consult your doctor about rabies vaccinations.
- ❖ Stay informed, stay safe! Rabies might be preventable, but it's deadly if ignored. Protect yourself, your pets, and your community by washing wounds, getting vaccinated, and reporting strange animal behavior. Let's work towards a rabies-free world!
- ❖ Let's work together to eliminate rabies deaths by 2030! Major health organizations are joining forces to make it happen. By taking simple steps like avoiding wildlife and vaccinating pets, we can create a world without unnecessary rabies-related deaths!
- ❖ #DoYouKnow that 40% of rabies deaths are children under 15? Every bite or scratch from an animal could carry the risk of rabies. Stay safe by washing wounds with soap and water and seeking medical care ASAP. Let's put an end to rabies-related deaths!

Image Library

Be sure to properly cite any images used.



High resolution image:

<https://phil.cdc.gov/Details.aspx?pid=19438>



High resolution image:

<https://www.pexels.com/photo/ambulance-architecture-building-business-263402/>



High resolution image:

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nurse_administers_a_vaccine_\(1\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nurse_administers_a_vaccine_(1).jpg)



High resolution image:
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Warning1.png>



Photo credit: US CDC



Photo credit: US CDC

Avoid Rabies



By Avoiding Animals

High resolution image:
<https://nara.getarchive.net/media/rabies-can-be-a-real-threat-032a9a>



Photo credit: US CDC



Photo credit: UAR Forum



Photo credit: UAR Forum



Photo credit: UAR



Photo credit: Ramesh Masti



Photo credit: Budi Chandra,
WHO



Photo credit: Geoffrey Njenga,
ILRI



Photo credit: Geoffrey Njenga, ILRI



Photo credit: Anabel Slater, ILRI



Photo credit: Anabel Slater, ILRI