



# PUBLIC FACT SHEET

## RABIES

### What is rabies?

A viral infection that is usually fatal if not treated within 48 hours.

### How is rabies spread?

Rabies may be spread through the following ways:

- From the saliva of an infected animal, through an open cut or scrape.
- Through organ transplant.

### What are possible symptoms?

Symptoms may include:

- fever
- pain at the site of the bite
- swallowing difficulty
- restlessness or excitability
- muscle twitching
- convulsions
- numbness and tingling

### How is rabies diagnosed?

From tests done on the infected animal or tests on the person.

### What is the treatment for rabies?

- Clean the bite with soap and water.
- Immediately contact your doctor
- Rabies vaccine must be given within 2 days of a bite.

### How can rabies be prevented?

- Avoid contact with unknown animals.
- Rabies vaccine.

### For more information on rabies:

Centers for Disease Controls and Prevention (CDC) <http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/>  
Ottawa County Health Department

[www.miOttawa.org](http://www.miOttawa.org)

Medline Plus/National Institutes of Health

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001334.htm>