



World Rabies Day 2024

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Why in News?

[The World Rabies Day](#) is observed annually on **September 28** to promote reflection on past misconceptions surrounding this fatal disease, while also highlighting the **continued efforts to advance vaccines and modern strategies for rabies prevention and control.**

What is Rabies?

▪ About:

- It is a **viral, vaccine-preventable zoonotic disease.**
- It is caused by a **Ribonucleic Acid (RNA) virus** that is **present in the saliva** of a **rabid animal (dog, cat, monkey, etc).**
- It is primarily transmitted to humans through bites from infected dogs, and despite being entirely preventable with timely vaccinations.
- Once clinical symptoms appear, rabies is **virtually 100% fatal.** The death invariably occurs in **four days to two weeks** due to **cardio-respiratory failure.**
 - The **incubation period varies from 2-3 months** but may vary from 1 week to 1 year, or rarely even more.

▪ Symptoms:

- The first symptoms of rabies may be similar to flu and may last for a few days.
- **Symptoms included:** Fever, Headache, Nausea, Vomiting, Anxiety, Hyperactivity, Difficulty swallowing, Excessive salivation, Hallucinations (illusions), Insomnia (sleep disorder).

What do we Need to Know About World Rabies Day (WRD)?

▪ About:

- It was first launched in 2007. It marks the death anniversary of **Louis Pasteur**, who developed the first rabies vaccine.
 - Louis Pasteur was a **French chemist, pharmacist, and microbiologist** renowned for his discoveries of the principles of **vaccination, microbial fermentation, and pasteurisation.**
- The **World Health Organisation (WHO)** has set an **ambitious goal to eliminate dog-mediated rabies by 2030.**

▪ Theme:

- The theme for WRD 2024 is '**Breaking Rabies Boundaries**'.
- It emphasises the One Health approach, which stresses the importance of collaboration between human health, animal health, and environmental sectors.

What are Facts About Rabies in India?

▪ Rabies in India:

- In **2021, rabies in India accounted for 59,000 deaths**, constituting 35% of the global total, with **96% of these cases stemming from dog bites.**

- The **economic burden of dog-mediated rabies** in India was estimated at **USD 8.6 billion**.
- **Newer rabies immunoglobulin (Rabies Ig)** vaccines are used for rabies prevention.
- **India's National Action Plan for Dog Mediated Rabies Elimination (NAPRE):**
 - Unveiled in 2023 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying **to eliminate rabies by 2030**. It includes:
 - **Awareness:** Building awareness about rabies.
 - **Surveillance:** Strengthening surveillance and health systems.
 - **Vaccination:** Prophylactic vaccination for humans and dogs.
 - **Dog population management**
 - Real-time monitoring of rabies vaccine stocks and tracking of beneficiaries.

India's Initiatives for Cure Against Rabies

- [National Rabies Control Programme \(NRCP\)](#)
- [Animal Birth Control \(ABC\) Programme](#)
- [One Health Approach](#)
- **Collaboration** WHO and [OIE](#) to strengthen rabies control measures and adopt international best practices.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. Consider the following diseases: (2014)

1. Diphtheria
2. Chickenpox
3. Smallpox

Which of the above diseases has/have been eradicated in India?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3
- (d) None

Ans: (b)

Q. With reference to recent developments regarding 'Recombinant Vector Vaccines', consider the following statements: (2021)

1. Genetic engineering is applied in the development of these vaccines.
2. Bacteria and viruses are used as vectors.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (c)

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