



Rabies

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has launched the **National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP)** for prevention and control of [Rabies](#).

What are the Objectives of NRCP?

- **Provision of rabies vaccine & rabies immunoglobulin** through national free drug initiatives;
- Training on appropriate **animal bite management**, prevention and control of rabies, surveillance and intersectoral coordination;
- Strengthening **surveillance of animal bites and rabies deaths reporting**;
- Creating **awareness about rabies prevention**.

What is Rabies?

- **About:**
 - Rabies is a **vaccine-preventable, zoonotic, viral 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 invariably transmitted following a bite of an infected animal that leads to **deposition of the saliva** and the virus in the wound.
 - Once clinical symptoms appear, **rabies is virtually 100% fatal**. The death invariably occurs in four days to two weeks due to cardio-respiratory failure.
 - In up to 99% of cases, domestic dogs are responsible for rabies virus transmission to humans.
 - The incubation period varies from **2-3 months but may vary from 1 week to 1 year, or rarely even more**.
- **Treatment:**
 - Rabies can be prevented by vaccinating pets, staying away from wildlife, and seeking medical care after potential exposures before symptoms start.
- **Symptoms:**
 - The first symptoms of rabies may be similar to **flu and may last for a few days, which includes:**
 - Fever, Headache, Nausea, Vomiting, Anxiety, Confusion, Hyperactivity, Difficulty swallowing, Excessive salivation, Hallucinations, Insomnia.

What is the Status of Rabies in India?

- India is endemic for rabies, and accounts for **36% of the world's rabies deaths**.
- It causes 18 000-20 000 deaths every year. About 30-60% of reported rabies cases and deaths in India occur in children under the age of 15 years as bites that occur in children often go unrecognized and unreported.
 - In India, dogs are responsible for about 97% of human rabies, followed by cats (2%), jackals, mongooses and others (1%). The disease is endemic throughout the country.

What are the Initiatives to Deal with Rabies?

- The Central Government has framed the **Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules, 2023** which is to be implemented by the local authority to control the population of stray dogs. The main focus of the rules is on anti-rabies vaccination of stray dogs and neutering of stray dogs as means of population stabilization.
- The Government has launched '**National Action Plan For Dog Mediated Rabies Elimination (NAPRE)** from India by 2030'. The stray dog population control and management of stray dogs is the mandate of the local bodies.

Source: PIB

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