

South Dakota State University

Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange

SDSU Extension Fact Sheets

SDSU Extension

1965

What You Should Know About Rabies

Cooperative Extension South Dakota State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_fact

Recommended Citation

South Dakota State University, Cooperative Extension, "What You Should Know About Rabies" (1965). *SDSU Extension Fact Sheets*. 879.

https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/extension_fact/879

This Fact Sheet is brought to you for free and open access by the SDSU Extension at Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in SDSU Extension Fact Sheets by an authorized administrator of Open PRAIRIE: Open Public Research Access Institutional Repository and Information Exchange. For more information, please contact michael.biondo@sdstate.edu.

What you should know about

RABIES



By Gordon McNeilly, Extension veterinarian, and
G. S. Harshfield, head of veterinary department,
South Dakota State University

Cooperative Extension Service



Brookings, South Dakota

What you should know about



RABIES

HISTORY Rabies has caused fear and death in men and animals for several centuries. Prior to the development of a vaccine by Pasteur, there was no known way of preventing death after man or animals were infected. Mad dogs, foxes, wolves, and other animals infected with rabies caused great fear among men. The vaccine developed by Pasteur gave man new hope in his fight against rabies.

CAUSE Rabies is caused by a virus which generally gains entrance into the body through bite wounds of rabid animals. However, it can gain entrance by other ways particularly if saliva from an infected animal falls on an area where the skin is broken or injured.

MODE OF SPREAD Many animals that are infected with rabies lose their natural fear of man and animals. During this phase of the disease, they will viciously attack man or animals which they normally would shun. The virus causing rabies is shed in the saliva. Consequently, the virus readily gains entrance into the body through bite and scratch wounds. Rabies is spread primarily from an infected animal to man or other animals by biting.

INCIDENCE OF RABIES IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Table 1 shows the number of rabies cases in South Dakota by types of animals from 1949 to 1964 diagnosed at the South Dakota State University Diagnostic Lab. The figures presented do not include cases of rabies which were diagnosed in the field only.

SYMPTOMS IN ANIMALS Animals exhibiting any of the following symptoms should be considered rabies suspects and approached cautiously.

1. Animals which lack the normal fear pattern of wild animals.
2. Animals which exhibit viciousness and attack other animals and man.
3. Animals which are unable to swallow.
4. Animals which are slobbering and apparently are not swallowing their saliva.
5. Animals which are crying in an unusual manner.

PREVENTION OF RABIES IN ANIMALS Several different vaccines are being produced to prevent rabies in domestic animals. Livestock and pet owners should consult their veterinarian to determine if their animals should be vaccinated and

Table 1. Rabies Cases in South Dakota Diagnosed by the South Dakota State University Diagnostic Lab

	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	
Human										1							
Skunk			56	58	27	36	24	24	42	78		86	42	69	51	53	51
Cattle		4	31	48	24	10	9	11	27	30	33	15	23	28	24	16	
Dog		2	8	33	16	9	7	3	4	7	15	5	5	8	10	4	
Cat	1	1	14	31	32	22	14	5	8	9	12	3	7	15	14	6	
Swine			3	4	1	1	1		1	6	3	2		1	1		
Sheep				3						1		3				1	
Rabbit				3	5		2										
Horse		1								1		1		1	1		
Rat				2	1	1											
Mice				3	8												
Squirrel			1	5	3			1									
Muskrat				4		1											
Badger			2	1								1					
Raccoon					1										2	1	
Deer				2													
Prairie Dog				1													
Mink						1											
Fox									1					1			
Bat														1			
Total	1	7	116	198	118	81	57	44	83	133	150	71	106	112	103	78	

which vaccine should be used. **Drugs are useless in both man and animals for treating rabies.**

HANDLING SUSPECT ANIMALS If possible, animals suspected of being infected with rabies should be confined in such a way that exposure to man and other animals will not occur. If the suspect is normal and healthy after 15 days, the animal was not infected with rabies. If the animal dies or is destroyed in the 15-day holding period, cool the head and take it to a diagnostic laboratory for fur-

ther testing. Call your veterinarian to rule out other diseases, if you suspect rabies.

PREVENTION OF RABIES IN MAN Keep away from all animals suspected of being infected with rabies. Vaccinate household pets to help protect the family from rabies. Persons attacked by vicious animals need medical attention. Consult with your family doctor or your veterinarian if you or your livestock are exposed to rabies. Advise your veterinarian that you suspect rabies when you call him to check a rabies suspect animal.

Published and distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914, by the Cooperative Extension Service of South Dakota State University, Brookings, John T. Stone, Director, U. S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.

5M-6-65-File: 15-2808

**EXTENSION SERVICE
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY**

BROOKINGS, SOUTH DAKOTA

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS
5M-6-65-2808**

**PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID
PAYMENT OF POSTAGE, \$300**