

Bites, Bats, and being safe
...a quiz about ***RABIES***



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Public Health

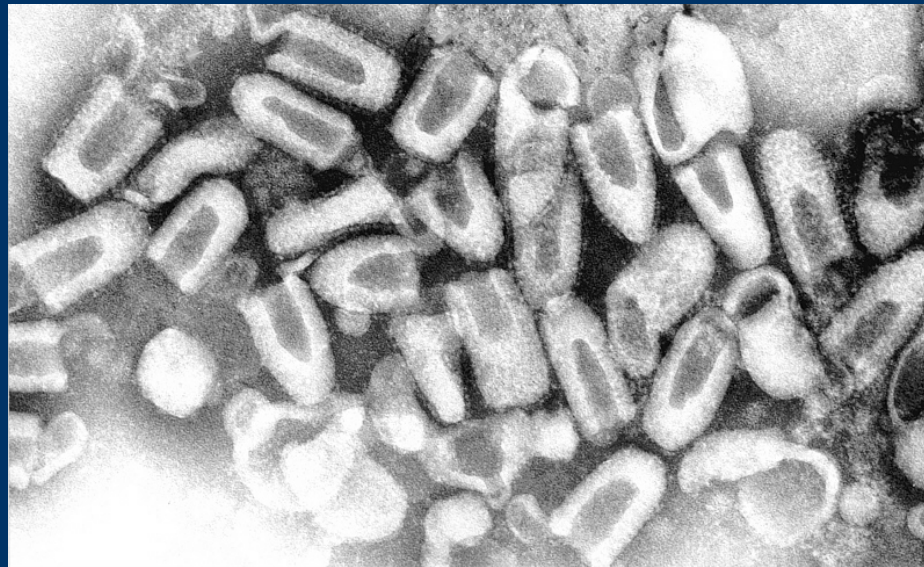
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Overview

- What is rabies?
- What animals transmit rabies?
- “The unapparent bat bite”
- Rabies exposure treatment
- Reporting bites
- Dog bite prevention

Quiz #1 - What is rabies?

- A. A bacteria that eats flesh
- B. A virus that infects the brain
- C. A fungus that infects the toes



What is rabies?



- Virus
- Transmitted in saliva, by bites
 - Contacts with blood, urine, feces of infected animal are NOT considered exposure.
 - Does not survive long outside of body
- Causes brain inflammation in mammals
- Fatal once symptomatic
- Kills 55,000 people per year worldwide
 - Most infected after dogs bites in other countries
 - Kills 1-3 Americans per year – often from bats
 - Many thousands of Americans exposed and treated.



Quiz #2 - What is the most common incubation period for rabies in people?

- A. Twelve hours
- B. One or two days
- C. 4-12 weeks

Range = 10 days – 7 years.

Several cases in US have had 1-2 year incubation periods.

Human Rabies Symptoms

- Numbness, tingling of bitten limb
- Headache, flu-like signs
- Problems swallowing, drooling
- Fear of wind and water
- Agitation, disorientation
- Slurring of words
- Tremors, seizures
- Coma
- Death



Rabies Symptoms - Animals

- **Furious rabies**
 - Aggressive, attacking drooling, unafraid.
- **Dumb rabies**
 - Weak, paralyzed, unafraid, drooling.



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Photo utexas.edu

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Quiz #3 -Which animal is the ***MOST*** likely to carry rabies?

- A. Coyote
- B. Squirrel
- C. Rat
- D. Bat



Quiz #4 - Which animal is the *LEAST* likely to carry rabies?

- A. Skunk
- B. Squirrel
- C. Raccoon
- D. Bat



Wild Animals

In California

- BATS and SKUNKS – highest risk of rabies
- Raccoons, foxes, and coyotes are also considered high rabies risks.
- Squirrels, rodents, rabbits – almost no risk.



Sizes of photos reflect relative risk
Of rabies carriage in California as of 2007

Dogs and cats

United States

- Low-to-moderate risk
- Dogs
 - Legally-required rabies vaccination since 1950s
- Cats
 - Vaccination laws vary
 - More rabid cats than dogs in US
- Before laws: thousands of rabies cases
 - 1937 – LA County rabies cases
 - Dogs – 1730
 - Cats – 20
 - Humans - 1

Dogs and cats

Outside United States

- Some rabies-free areas (England, Taiwan, New Zealand...)
- Very high risk many places - dogs
 - 2005 Mexico – over 100 rabid dogs reported around Mexico City
 - 2006 China – over 3000 people died from rabies from dog bites
- Huge increase in smuggling of puppies into US since 2004
 - 10,000 crossing Mexican border/year, hundreds by air, forged papers
 - Sold by classified ads, swap meets, parking lots. \$\$\$\$
 - Are we importing rabid dogs?



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Quiz #5 - You find a bat in a room with a child. You remove the child from the room, then you:

- A. Open the windows and try to get the bat to fly away.
- B. Kill the bat with a broom and throw it out.
- C. Cover the bat with a bucket to trap it (without touching it) and call Animal Control.

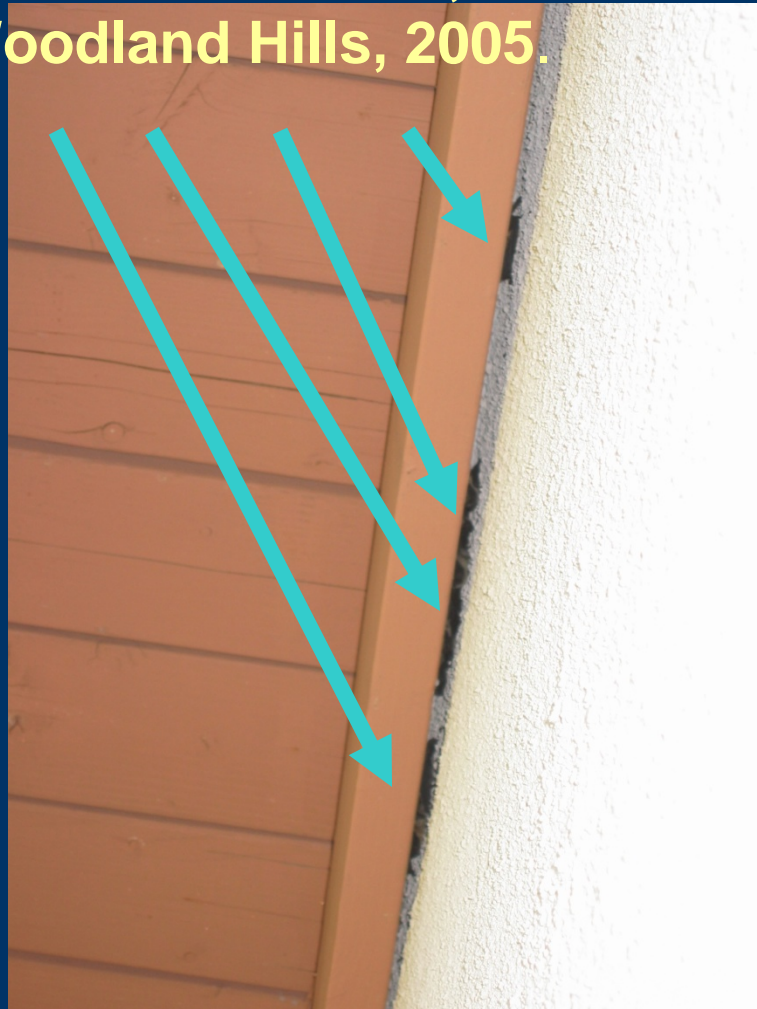
Bat Bites



- Most human rabies in US from bites of insect-eating bats.
- Some bites too small to see.
- Bites from bats are considered rabies exposures.
 - Unless bat is tested and is negative.
- Bats found near children, pets, or sleeping people **MUST** be tested for rabies.
 - Even if there is no known bite.

Pictures courtesy CDC

**Bats roosting
in crevice between
balcony
and side of house,
Woodland Hills, 2005.**



Bats and Rabies

- Most bats not rabid
 - Fewer than 1/1000
 - Protected by law
- Rabid bats
 - More likely to be
 - On ground
 - Flying in daylight
 - Near people, pets

Rabid bats in LA

- Summer camp
 - 3 bats (2 rabid)
 - 14 children touched
- Elementary school
 - 3 bats (2 rabid)
 - None touched
- High school
 - 1 rabid bat, several “rescued” bats
 - Teacher helped kids take bats home
 - 6 students needed treatment
- 24 in 2007
 - usually 8-12



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Quiz #6 - If a person is exposed to rabies, the treatment to prevent rabies is:

- A. Vaccine given four times in the upper arm over two weeks, plus one dose of immune globulin near bite wound.
 - B. One shot (vaccine) in the upper arm.
 - C. 30 shots (vaccines) in the stomach given over a two month period.
- Note: treatment must start **LONG** before symptoms appear.



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Quiz #7 - A child says a dog bit him in the school yard. You:

- A. Inspect the injury, tell the nurse, tell the parents.
- B. Same as #1, but also insist that the child's parents get rabies treatment for him.
- C. Same as #1, but also:
 - Find out where the dog is now, what type of dog
 - Find out where it lives (if not a stray)
 - Report the bite to Public Health or Animal Control

Note: child might not need rabies treatment.

Reporting Animal Bites

Who is required to report bites by law?

- Anyone with knowledge of bite
- Report to Public Health or Animal Control
- Location, description of animal important!

What happens then?

- Dogs and cats
 - 10 day quarantine or test for rabies
- Horses, livestock
 - 30 day quarantine or test
- Wild mammals
 - No quarantine – test only
- Squirrel, rodent, rabbit bites NOT legally reportable

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Quiz #8 - What should children do when approached by a stray dog?

- A. Hold out a hand for the dog to sniff it.
- B. Hold very still, arms held in to body, looking away from dog.
- C. Run away, scream for help

Be A Tree



Stop



**Fold in your
branches**



**Watch your roots
grow and count
in your head**

Dog Bite Data

Every year in the U.S.

- 4.7 million bitten, 800,000 seek medical care, about a dozen die.¹

Children and dog bites

- Age 4 years and younger
 - most bites to head and face
- Age 5-9 most frequently bitten
- Dog usually known to child (family or friend's dog)
- Child usually instigates confrontation

Dog Breeds and Dog Bites

Breed \neq Bite risk prediction

Key factors determining dog's bite risk

- History
 - prior aggression to people, to other animals, predatory behavior
- Training and socialization
- Stress and pain level
- Dog-behavior education of children (and adults)

Stray dog bite prevention for kids

- “Be a tree” (without branches)
 - Be quiet, motionless, hand in armpits, no eye contact with dog.
 - Do not run or scream!
- If dog begins to bite:
 - “Feed” bookbag or jacket to dog.
- If knocked to ground:
 - Fetal position, cover face and neck with hands.

Owned Dog Bite Prevention

- Get right dog
- Exercise, socialize, train dog
- Notice dog's pain, feelings
- Seek medical care for dog
- Train children to "read" dog, stay away from dog's "things"
 - Dogs view children as siblings, not leaders
- Never leave small children alone with *any* dog (even a Chihuahua!)

A photograph of a happy yellow Labrador puppy sitting on a light brown tiled floor. The puppy is looking directly at the camera with its mouth wide open, showing its tongue and teeth. It is wearing a black leash. The photo is centered on a dark blue background.

Questions?

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