ALDEL EDUCATION TRUST
ALDEL COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND RESEARCH
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(Issue - V)

AROGYAM DIGEST

28th September 2025

World Rabies Day

"ACT NOW: YOU, WE, COMMUNITIES"

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"To Strive for Excellence in Pharmaceutical Education and Research to Develop Competent Pharmacy Professionals."

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- To Create an Environment which encourages Lifelong Learning, Professionalism and Social Responsibility.
- To Conduct Collaborative Advanced and Innovative Research that caters the needs of Pharmaceutical Industry and Community.
- To Foster and Develop Entrepreneurial Skills to Serve the Patients and community.

QUALITY POLICY

- Committed to be a centre of excellence by ensuring quality education and innovative
- research to empower students to become competent pharmacists

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OVERVIEW

It is celebrated annually to raise awareness about rabies prevention and to highlight progress in defeating this horrifying disease. 28th September also marks the anniversary of Louis Pasteur's death, the French chemist and microbiologist, who developed the first rabies vaccine. Rabies is a vaccine-preventable, zoonotic, viral disease affecting the central nervous system. In up to 99% of the human rabies cases, dogs are responsible for virus transmission. Children between the age of 5 and 14 years are frequent victims. Rabies infects mammals, including dogs, cats, livestock and wildlife. Rabies spreads to people and animals via saliva, usually through bites scratches, or direct contact with mucosa (e.g. eyes, mouth, or open wounds). Once clinical symptoms appear, rabies is virtually 100% fatal. Today, safe and efficacious animal and human vaccines are among the important tools that exist to eliminate human deaths from rabies while awareness is the key driver for success of communities to engage in effective rabies prevention.

INTRODUCTION TO RABIES

- Rabies is a viral zoonotic disease that causes progressive and fatal inflammation of the brain and spinal cord. Clinically, it has two forms:

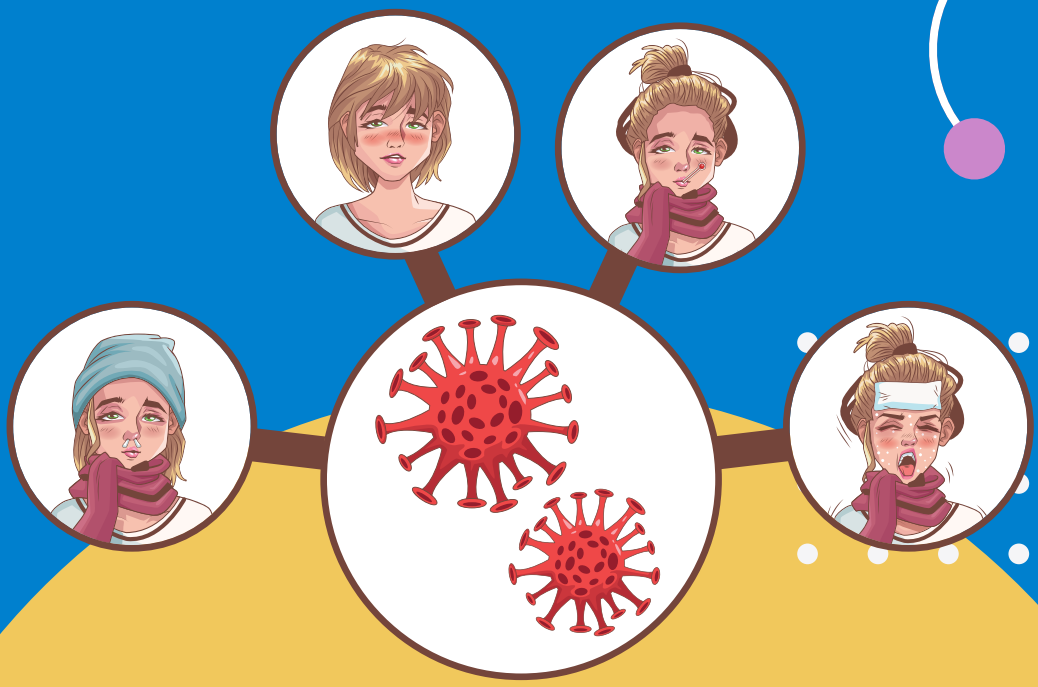
1. Furious rabies – characterized by hyperactivity and hallucinations.
2. Paralytic rabies – characterized by paralysis and coma.

- Although fatal once clinical signs appear, rabies is entirely avoidable; vaccines, medicines and technologies have long been available to prevent death from rabies. Nevertheless, rabies still kills tens of thousands of people each year. Of these cases, approximately 99% are acquired from the bite of an infected dog.
- Dog-mediated human rabies can be eliminated by tackling the disease at its source: infected dogs. Making people aware of how to avoid the bites of rabid dogs (dogs infected with the rabies virus) to seek treatment when bitten and to vaccinate animals can successfully disrupt the rabies transmission cycle.

Rabies is estimated to cause 59 000 human deaths annually in over 150 countries, with 95% of cases occurring in Africa and Asia. Due to underreporting and uncertain estimates, this number is likely a gross underestimate. The burden of disease is disproportionally borne by rural poor populations, with approximately half of cases attributable to children under 15 years of age.

Symptoms of rabies:

- The incubation period for rabies is typically 2–3 months but may vary from one week to one year, depending on factors such as the location of virus entry and the viral load.
- Initial symptoms of rabies include generic signs like fever, pain and unusual or unexplained tingling, pricking, or burning sensations at the wound site.
- As the virus moves to the central nervous system, progressive and fatal inflammation of the brain and spinal cord develops.
- Clinical rabies in people can be managed but very rarely cured, and not without severe neurological deficits.



Diagnosis

- Currently there are no WHO-approved diagnostic tools for detecting rabies infection before the onset of clinical disease.
- Clinical diagnosis of rabies is difficult without a reliable history of contact with a rabid animal or specific symptoms of hydrophobia or aerophobia.
- Accurate risk assessment is crucial for deciding on PEP (PEP (Post Exposure prophylaxis) administration.
- Once symptoms emerge, and death is inevitable, offering comprehensive and compassionate palliative care is recommended.
- Where possible, the biting animal should be tested.

Prevention

Vaccinating dogs

Vaccinating dogs, including puppies, through mass dog vaccination programs is the most cost-effective strategy for preventing rabies in people because it stops the transmission at its source.

Awareness

Public education for both children and adults on dog behaviour and bite prevention, what to do if bitten or scratched by a potentially rabid animal, and responsible pet ownership are essential extensions of rabies vaccination programmes.

Vaccinating people

Effective vaccines are available to immunize people both before and after potential exposures. As listed under the WHO - Prequalification of Medical Products as of 2024, there are only 3 WHO pre-qualified human rabies vaccines available globally

- RABIVAX-S by Serum Institute of India Pvt. Ltd.,
- VaxiRab N by Zydus Lifesciences Limited, and
- VERORAB by Sanofi Pasteur.

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