Rabies in South Carolina

Rabid Animals

Percentages of Rabid Animals, 2010 - 2015

- Raccoon: 50%
- Skunk: 19%
- Fox: 15%
- Bat: 8%
- Cat: 5%
- Dog: 2%
- Other: 1%

Every year, about 124 animals test positive for rabies in South Carolina.

- Approximately 30% of these cases involve human exposure!

Rabies Prevention

Any mammal can get rabies! Rabies is usually transmitted through a bite from an infected animal.

- Don’t keep wild animals as pets. If you see an animal in need, contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator in your area. Do not approach the animal.
- Never touch wild or stray animals with your bare hands. Educate children on why they should not handle wild or unknown animals.
- Vaccinate pets against rabies. By law, all dogs, cats and ferrets should be vaccinated. Keep shots up to date, whether annually or as directed by a veterinarian.
- Watch for abnormal behavior. Avoid wild animals acting tame, and tame animals acting wild.

Dealing with Exposure

If Exposure Occurs:
1. Immediately wash bite/wound with soap and water.
2. Contact a health care provider, even for minor incidents.
3. Notify your local Bureau of Environmental Health Services office.

Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP):
Hundreds of South Carolinians must undergo preventive treatment for rabies every year, due to exposure to a rabid or suspected rabid animal.

Did you know?
In SC the average cost of post-exposure treatment is $10,000.

www.scdhec.gov/rabies