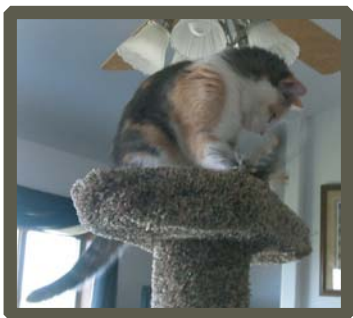


How can I protect my pet from rabies?

Take your pet to a veterinarian on a regular basis and keep rabies vaccinations up-to-date for all cats, dogs and ferrets.

Maintain control of your pet by keeping cats and ferrets indoors and keeping dogs in a fenced area or under supervision.



Spay or neuter your pet to help reduce the number of unwanted and unvaccinated animals.

If you live on a farm or in a rural setting, keep your pet's rabies vaccination status current and put your pet in a kennel or barn at night or when you are away from the premises.

Take measures to keep wild animals out of barns or other buildings where a pet is kept.

Do not take unvaccinated pets into schools, nursing homes, day-care centers or other public places.

What happens if my pet bites someone?

1. You should find your pet's rabies vaccination papers.
2. You should take your pet immediately to a veterinarian to have its current health status checked.
3. If your pet is healthy, it will have to be isolated and quarantined for 10 days. This means it has to be kept in an area where it:
 - a. Cannot get out
 - b. Cannot come into contact with other humans or animals.(If your pet is not healthy, it may have to be euthanized.)
4. Check your pet daily. If its health changes or your pet dies, contact your veterinarian immediately. You should then call your state or local health department.
5. At the end of the 10-day period, your pet needs to be checked by a veterinarian to ensure that it is still healthy.



For more information, contact
Division of Disease Control
at 800.472.2180
or visit www.ndhealth.gov/disease

RABIES

What Pet Owners Should Know



Why does my pet need rabies vaccine?



Vaccinating your pet protects it from becoming infected with rabies and consequently dying or having to be destroyed. Vaccinating your pets also helps to prevent human exposure to rabies.

In the past, domestic animals were a major source of rabies. Successful vaccination programs have resulted in a significant drop in the number of dog and cat rabies cases in the United States. Currently, the majority of rabies cases and the primary reservoirs for rabies occur in wildlife, mainly in the raccoon, skunk, bat and fox populations. In the upper Midwest, skunks are the main source of rabies.

Pets and other domestic animals become infected with rabies when they are bitten by rabid animals. When rabies occurs in domestic animals, the risk to humans greatly increases. Domestic animals that expose humans to rabies contribute significantly to the tremendous cost of rabies prevention in the United States. The cost to treat one person who was exposed to a rabid animal can exceed \$1,500. Vaccinating pets is relatively inexpensive in comparison.

How can I tell if an animal is rabid?

Viciousness, biting, aggressiveness, restlessness, nervousness, lack of fear, inability to swallow, excessive salivation and partial paralysis are all symptoms of rabies. However, not all symptoms appear in all cases, and some rabid animals may exhibit only a few symptoms. Additionally, rabid animals may exhibit only general-illness symptoms, such as sluggishness or loss of appetite.

What about wild animals or strays?

Do not keep or handle wild animals. In North Dakota, it is illegal to keep a skunk or raccoon for any purpose (except in licensed facilities). Do not let skunks or raccoons take up residence near your home or farmstead. If your dog or cat fights with a wild animal or is bitten by a wild or stray animal, contact your veterinarian for assistance.

Avoid contact with stray dogs and cats, as their vaccination and health status are unknown. Each year, a number of people in North Dakota undergo rabies treatment as a result of being bitten by a stray dog or cat that was not available for testing or quarantine. If the animal cannot be caught and tested for rabies or quarantined, rabies treatment is recommended.



Do not allow your pet to come into contact with wild animals or strays, even if your pet has been vaccinated.