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Ministry of
Natural Resources

Ministère des
richesses naturelles

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RABIES SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENTS

Rabies can manifest itself as 'dumb' or 'furious' rabies.

Dumb Rabies:

- some animals may become depressed and retreat to isolated places
- wild animals, especially skunks, may lose their fear of humans
- animals may show signs of paralysis such as abnormal facial expressions, drooping head, sagging jaw, or paralyzed hind limbs

Furious Rabies:

- animals may show extreme excitement and aggression
- animals may gnaw and bite their own limbs
- animals may attack stationary things or other animals
- bouts of furious rabies usually alternate with periods of depression

How long does it take for an animal to show the symptoms of rabies after it has been infected?

The time between exposure to the virus and the onset of symptoms can range from about two weeks to several months.

Can animals have rabies without showing any symptoms?

Yes. The rabies virus can be found in animal saliva days before any obvious symptoms develop. Once symptoms develop, the animal almost always succumbs to the disease.

Treatment for Humans against Rabies

All people who are knowingly exposed to rabies must be treated immediately. This treatment usually consists of a series five injections given over a one-month period. The treatment is safe and effective.

For further information, contact the Ministry of Health Information Line, toll-free, 1-888-668-4636. In Toronto, call (416) 327-0427.

Contact:

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For more information visit www.mnr.gov.on.ca/mnr/rabies/