

# Rabies

Rabies is an infectious viral disease that affects the nervous system. It is transmitted by a bite (or saliva) from a rabid animal.

Vaccinating pets (dogs, cats and ferrets) against rabies protects them and provides a “buffer zone” between humans and rabid wild animals. Oregon law requires all dogs to be vaccinated against rabies as early as three months of age.

Worldwide, about one person every 10 minutes dies of rabies, mostly in Africa and Asia. Although human rabies is rare in the United States, where there are typically only two or three cases per year, animal bites are very common.

As a result, thousands of people each year receive rabies post-exposure prophylaxis, or PEP. The recommended treatment is four shots given in the first two weeks after exposure on days 0, 3, 7 and 14.

In September 2011, an unvaccinated cat in Lake County was found playing with a bat. The bat tested positive for rabies and the cat was euthanized. Under Oregon Law, when an unvaccinated dog or cat contacts a rabid animal, the dog or cat must be quarantined for 6 months or euthanized.

In August 2011, a bat found by an unvaccinated dog in Eagle Point was positive for rabies; the dog was euthanized.