

RABIES - SYMPTOMS, TREATMENT

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Abstract:

Rabies is a viral disease caused by the rabies virus, which occurs in warm-blooded animals and humans. It is transmitted to humans through the saliva of infected animals when they bite or scratch. Severe progressive damage to the central nervous system is observed when the virus is infected.

The virus moves through the damaged skin to the nerve endings and spreads through them to the brain and spinal cord. The disease is fatal to humans and can only be prevented by emergency vaccination.

According to the World Health Organization, 59,000 people die from rabies every year. 99% of them got sick as a result of rabid dog bites. However, the availability of vaccines for animals and humans has led to a decrease in the death rate of rabies. The virus affects the central nervous system and causes inflammation of the brain (specific encephalitis). Skunks, domestic dogs, cats, rabbits and wild animals can transmit the virus to humans through bites and scratches. Fighting rabies depends on prompt treatment.

Signs and symptoms of rabies

The main symptom of rabies in humans is hydrophobia or fear of water. First there is a fear of drinking water, then there are signs of fear at the sight of water and when talking about water. In addition, tremors of swallowing muscles, fear, seizures, interruptions in breathing can be detected.

Seizures are triggered by exposure to sound and light. The patient begins to break everything and throw himself at people, after a "violent" attack, "silent" begins - the initial sign of paralysis. After that, respiratory arrest and death occur.

The time from the bite to the appearance of symptoms is called the incubation period of the disease. Usually, the symptoms of the disease begin to appear 4-12 weeks after a person is infected. However, the incubation period can be several days or up to six years.

Rabies begins with flu-like symptoms, including:

Fever;

Muscle weakness;

Pains.

In addition to these main symptoms, an increase in body temperature up to 37 °C, depression, sleep disturbance, insomnia, restlessness, and pain in the bitten area (even if the wound has healed) can be noted. As the virus continues to damage the central nervous system, the disease can develop in two different ways.

Angry rabies

People with rabies develop hyperactivity and aggression. Other symptoms include:

Insomnia;

Anxiety;

Chaos;

Promotion;

Hallucinations;

Profuse salivation;

Problems with swallowing;

Fear of water.

Paralytic (quiet) rabies

This form of rabies takes longer to develop, but the effects are severe. The infected person gradually becomes paralyzed and eventually falls into a coma, and may even die. According to the World Health Organization, paralysis occurs in 30% of cases of rabies.

Who can get rabies?

The rabies virus dies quickly in the external environment. 15 minutes at 56 °C, 2 minutes at boiling.

The rabies virus is transmitted to humans as a result of the saliva of rabid animals biting or scratching the wound. Infection can also occur when the virus enters the mucous membrane or open wounds through other means. The virus can only be transmitted from animal to human or from animal to animal. Although the probability of its transmission from person to person is very low, several such cases have been recorded in history.



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