



Facts Not Fiction

by Bob Weisdack
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This booklet is dedicated to my father Edward W. Weisdack Sr. and father-in-law Newton F. Rieck. These two Individuals cared so much, but so few noticed.

I wrote this booklet in such a fashion in hopes that everyone will understand what they have read.

Hopefully, this Information will provide you with a true comprehensive knowledge pertaining to rabies, "the mysterious disease".

(General Information)

1. **WHAT IS RABIES?** Rabies is an acute infectious viral disease of the central nervous system (CNS) which can be transmitted to ALL warm-blooded mammals including humans) and is usually fatal if not treated medically. Rabies is also called "hydrophobia" or "lyssa". Hydrophobia, in Latin means fear of water.

2. **DOES RABIES HAVE STAGES?** An educated guess would lead me to say yes, but this is only a theory and has not been proven in all documented cases.

DUMB RABIES. I consider this to be first Initial stage of the disease. The animal acts stupefied and is not in control of its own natural instincts. Some wild animals may even act friendly; this behavior should tip you off to the fact that the animal is sick or diseased.

FURIOUS RABIES. This is the 2nd stage where the animal displays a very pronounced excitability period. The animal may attack wildly even if unprovoked.

PARALYTIC RABIES. This is the final climax before death. Generally the animal displays a dragging of the hindquarters, severe difficulty in breathing, swallowing and possible frothing at the mouth followed by death.

3. **HOW OLD IS RABIES?** Cavemen on their walls probably documented rabies, but confirmed documentation was in 2300 B.C.

4. **CAN YOU DIE FROM RABIES?** Yes! Few people die from rabies now, due to modern medicine, but if a person becomes exposed to the rabies virus and does not receive medical treatment will most likely die.

5. **IS RABIES INCURABLE?** No! If a person seeks immediate medical attention once exposed, the probability of dying is very low. However if the person goes beyond the incubation period and develops signs and symptoms of the disease then there is no drug on this earth that will save his/her life.

6. **HOW DO RABIES OUTBREAKS BEGIN?** A contaminated animal enters an area, which contains a high amount of animals (high herd density). The infected animal comes in contact with non-infected ones and a biting event occurs thus transmitting the disease. This creates a chain reaction, which allows the disease to proliferate with great intensity. These outbreaks usually occur in areas where trapping and hunting has been limited or restricted.

8. **WILL RABID ANIMALS ATTACK HUMANS?** Yes! If an individual encounters a diseased animal the animal displays no fear and has been known to attack humans even if unprovoked.

9. **WHAT FIRST-AID TREATMENT SHOULD BE GIVEN?** Wash exposed area with soap and warm water. Do not attempt to close puncture wounds, unless profuse bleeding is taking place. Seek medical attention immediately!

11. **HOW CAN RABIES BE TRANSMITTED?** Rabies is transmitted only by introducing the virus into open cuts or wounds in the skin, or by way of the mucous membranes. Generally receiving a bite from an infected animal where the virus-laden saliva penetrates the skin surface transmits rabies.

NON-BITE TRANSMISSION has also been documented. This entails scratches, abrasions, open wounds, or mucous membranes contaminated with infected saliva or brain tissue.

AIR-BORNE TRANSMISSION has been documented in laboratory exposures, and possible exposures in bat infested caves. This type of transmission is seen when a high concentration of the rabies virus remains suspended in air in non-ventilated conditions.

The only **HUMAN-TO-HUMAN TRANSMISSION** of rabies has been documented in cases where cornea transplants have taken place.

12. WHAT ANIMALS ARE AFFECTED BY RABIES? As mentioned before ALL warm-blooded animals can be affected. Generally, bats are the most likely indicator to the first appearance of the disease. Primarily, carnivorous species such as fox, skunks, raccoons, wolves, coyotes and bobcats account for the most documented cases. Opossums, groundhogs, deer and muskrats rarely acquire the disease, but this rarity has been documented.

Rabbits, squirrels, guinea pigs, mice, chipmunks and rats are rarely infected and have not been proven to transmit the disease to humans.

Birds, insects and fish do not transmit rabies.

16. HOW FAST DO YOU NEED MEDICAL ATTENTION (INCUBATION PERIOD)? Generally, the incubation period is 10 days from the time of exposure, but phenomenal cases with less than 10 days have occurred. Rarely is the incubation period less than 10 days or more than 5 months. (If exposed, seek medical attention immediately!)

17. HOW LONG CAN RABIES REMAIN DORMANT? Rabies generally displays its signs and symptoms after a two-week period but has been documented in some cases to remain dormant for up to 12 months, possibly longer. Frozen brain tissue may allow the virus to remain viable as long as the tissue exists in a solid form.

18. IS THERE ANY WAY TO VISUALLY TELL IF AN ANIMAL IS POSITIVELY RABID? No! One can only go by suspicious behavior. Remember, other wildlife diseases may have similar characteristics.

The only true (positive) way to determine if an animal is rabid is to have lab testing.

Observation of late stage signs is only an indication that the animal is suspect.

20. WHO DO YOU CONTACT IF YOU BECOME EXPOSED TO ANY ANIMAL? If not an adult, inform parents immediately. If afraid to tell parents, go immediately to a police officer, game warden or health official so you will obtain prompt medical attention. NEVER be afraid to seek help. Remember, if you do not report this encounter it could prove to be fatal.

27. WHAT CONSTITUTES A HUMAN EXPOSURE? A bite, which breaks the skin. Saliva In a scratch, cut, abrasion or placed in the mouth. Breathing in of a live rabies virus.

29. WHERE DO YOU FIND THE MOST CASES OF RABIES? Rabies is found primarily among wildlife (fox, coons, skunks, wolves, coyotes, and bobcats) living in nature.

30. WHERE IS NATURE? Nature begins just outside my door. There is no control over anything, which happens outside the perimeter of my house.

31. WHY DO WILD ANIMALS MOVE INTO AND RESIDE IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS? These animals find an overwhelming amount of food in neighborhood garbage cans, trash bins or feeding programs developed by some animal lovers. Man's shelters provide excellent hiding places, which enable these animals to remain undetected for quite some time.

32. IS THERE A BOUNDARY LINE FOR WILDLIFE? There is no line of demarcation, which designates that wildlife begins at any specific point.

There have been raccoons found in elevators of condominiums in Pittsburgh and fox roaming the streets of New York.

35. WHAT IS A GOOD RULE OF THUMB WHEN OBSERVING WILD ANIMALS? Stay away (look from a distance), do not attempt to feed or touch. Report all suspicious acting animals to proper authorities.

37. ARE THERE ANY CONTROL METHODS TO PREVENT RABIES OUTBREAK IN WILDLIFE?

No! At this present time there is no scientific evidence to indicate that rabies in wildlife can ever be controlled. Rabies is associated with high herd densities; trappers and hunters reduce herd densities reducing the probability of transmission.

39. DO TRAPPERS AND HUNTERS PROMOTE PUBLIC HEALTH? Yes! If allowed, these individuals help to develop a "protective barrier" between the human population and wildlife. This can only be effective if the whole perimeter is allowed to be trapped and hunted.

59. WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WITH A SUSPECT ANIMAL? The best answer is that the animal should be buried (deeply) without any undue transporting of the animal.

66. HOW SHOULD THE HEAD BE HANDLED IF EXPOSURE DOES TAKE PLACE? The animal should be dispatched without damaging the head. Do not extract the head, but place entire body in an airtight bag. Place bag in an airtight container so as the specimen remains cool, but not frozen. Take the specimen to your local the health department.

69. SHOULD YOU WASH YOUR HANDS AFTER TOUCHING ANY ANIMAL? Yes! Washing your hands in hot soapy water will never hurt. Be sure to clean under the nail area also.

71. WILL YOU FIND A RABID ANIMAL NEAR WATER? Usually a diseased animal in the final stage will tend to shy away from water. Remember there are exceptions to every rule, beware of such occurrences.

Ignorance may kill you!

"RABIES"

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