

FIGHT THE BITE! Protecting Yourself Against Rabies



Rabies is a fatal disease caused by a virus that affects warm blooded animals, including humans. Once symptoms of rabies appear, rabies is almost always fatal in animals and humans. The rabies virus is spread by contact with saliva from an infected animal, generally from a bite, lick or scratch.

There are many ways to protect yourself and your family from rabies:

- If you are an animal owner, keep your pet's vaccinations up to date. Dogs and cats three months of age or older are legally required to be immunized yearly against rabies
- If you are bitten immediately wash the wound or exposed surface with soap and water, remove any clothing that may have been contaminated and seek medical advice as soon as possible
- Report all animal bite or scratch exposures to York Region Community and Health Services
- Teach your children to stay away from all unfamiliar animals and to immediately tell an adult if they have been bitten or scratched by an animal
- If you are travelling abroad, avoid contact with wild animals and be especially careful around cats and dogs in developing countries



For health-related information call York Region *Health Connection* at 1-800-361-5653, TTY 1-866-252-9933 or visit www.york.ca/healthyschools