Rabies in South Carolina

Rabid Animals

Percentages of Rabid Animals, 2014 - 2019

- Raccoon: 48%
- Skunk: 21%
- Fox: 10%
- Bat: 8%
- Cat: 8%
- Dog: 2%
- Other Domestic: 1.5%
- Other Wild: 1.5%

Every year, about 130 animals test positive for rabies in South Carolina.
- Approximately 30% of these cases involve human exposure!

Rabies Prevention

- Don’t keep wild animals as pets. If you see an animal in need, contact a licensed wildlife rehabilitator in your area. Do not approach the animal.
- Never touch wild or stray animals with your bare hands. Educate children on why they should not handle wild or unknown animals.
- Vaccinate pets against rabies. By law, all dogs, cats and ferrets should be vaccinated. Keep shots up to date, whether annually or as directed by a veterinarian.
- Watch for abnormal behavior. Avoid wild animals acting tame and tame animals acting wild.

Dealing with Exposure

If Exposure Occurs:
1. Immediately wash bite/wound with soap and water.
2. Contact a health care provider, even for minor incidents.

Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP):
Hundreds of South Carolinians must undergo preventive treatment for rabies every year, due to exposure to a rabid or suspected rabid animal.

Did you know?
Per the SC Rabies Control Act, it is the law to report all wild and domestic animal bites to your local BEHS office by the end of the next working day.