

# Department of Disease Control

## Weekly Disease Forecast No.18/2021\_Rabies

### (9 - 15 May 2021)

From the national disease surveillance system, last year (2020) there were 3 human rabies deaths in 3 provinces: Nongkhai, Sakaeo, and Sisaket. This year (2021) up to the present, last week one death occurred in Buriram province in the northeastern region. The patient was bitten by his own dog that was bitten by a stray dog.

Thailand has set a target to eliminate rabies by the year 2030. However, the rabies situation had been much improved over the past decades. The nationwide campaign kindly provided by the Princess's project has vividly shown a path to achieve the target soon as during the past 5 years there were very few human rabies cases detected a year.

According to this week disease forecast, human rabies may occur in some provinces in border areas with insufficient dog vaccination coverage.



As rabies is 100% fatal, the Department of Disease Control (DDC) therefore, strongly urges owners to bring their dogs and cats to receive the rabies vaccination, the best cost-effective preventive measure, at the age of 2-month-old and annually thereafter.

The DDC also advises people to avoid a dog bite by following the 5 Don't measures, i.e. Don't 1) step on a dog, 2) try to separate fighting dogs with bare hands, 3) panic, make loud noises, or encourage it to play aggressively, 4) disturb a dog that is eating, caring for puppies, or sleeping, and 5) approach an unfamiliar dog. Furthermore, don't let small children play with a dog unsupervised.

A person bitten by a suspected rabid animal should immediately wash the wound with soap and water thoroughly and apply povidone iodine (if not available, tincture iodine, or alcohol can be used) into the wound to kill the rabies virus and other pathogens. The person should then seek a medical attention for wound treatment and rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) immediately. Delay in getting the PEP is risky and might result in death. Notify also the concerned veterinary officers or volunteers for advice. The suspected animal must be kept properly and observed for 10 days. If it dies within this observation period, the carcass must be sent to a laboratory for rabies examination.

For queries or additional information, please call DDC hotline 1422.

