

# Weekly Disease Forecast No.53\_Rabies

## (11-17 April 2016)

From the national disease surveillance system, there were 5 human rabies deaths during 1 January to 7 April 2016. All were bitten by dogs with no vaccination or unknown history of vaccination against rabies . The victims did not seek any medical care for post-exposure treatment.



This week disease forecast reveals that there is an increasing risk of animal bites during this summer school vacation when rural children are usually playing outdoors and semi-owned dogs and cats are roaming around. Parents should watch their children closely and teach them not to stay close to or disturb unfamiliar animals.

If a person is bitten or scratched by rabid dogs or cats, or if the animal's saliva gets directly into eyes, nose, mouth, or a wound, he or she should wash the wound (or the exposed areas) with soap and water immediately and thoroughly for a minimum of 15 minutes. Povidone iodine should also be applied into the wound. If not available, 70% alcohol or iodine tincture should be used instead. Medical care including post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) at a hospital nearby is urgent and crucial.

All biting incidents by unvaccinated dogs and cats must be notified to local authorities. Animals with obvious signs of rabies must be euthanized. Animals that still look healthy should be kept under quarantine for 10 days to watch for signs of the disease.

Unfortunately, there is no effective treatment for rabies and thus it is always 100% fatal. The best way to prevent rabies is therefore the most cost-effective yearly rabies vaccination in dogs and cats.

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

