

RABIES

SPECIES AFFECTED

Various domesticated and wild animals

DESCRIPTION

Rabies is a virus that infects the central nervous system in mammals. The disease is invariably fatal if left untreated; however, effective vaccines are available to protect people and pets. Rabies is passed along through contact with an infected animal's saliva and is almost always transmitted when an infected animal bites an uninfected animal or person. People usually get rabies from the bite of a rabid animal. It is also possible, but quite rare, that people may get rabies if infectious material from a rabid animal, such as saliva, gets directly into their eyes, nose, mouth, or a wound.

The test to determine if an animal has contracted the rabies virus requires them to be euthanized to test the cells of the brainstem. Some of the visible signs of a rabid animal could include any of the following symptoms: aggressive behavior, attacking for no reason, lethargy, walking in circles, confusion, and drunk-like behavior.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Rabies is a mandatory reportable disease in Oregon. In addition, any case of rabies must also be reported to the State Public Health Veterinarian.