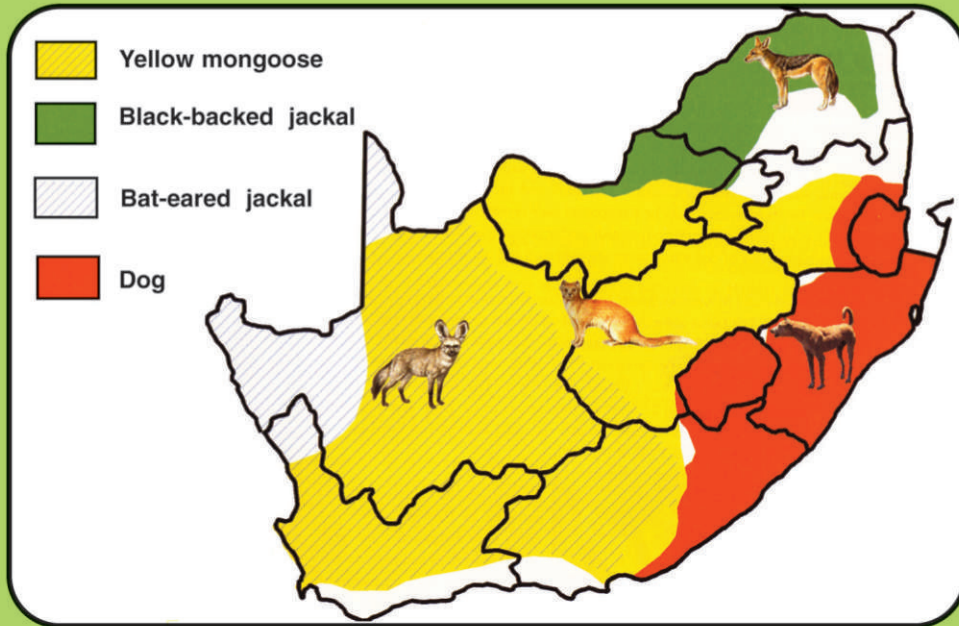


The distribution of rabies endemicity by major vectors in South Africa.



Animals most often implicated in rabies transmission.

**ANIMALS**

**Domestic**

- Dogs
- Cats
- Sheep
- Goats
- Horses and donkeys
- Pigs
- Guinea pigs

**Wild**

- Mongoose
- Suricate
- Mongoose

- Civet
- Small-spotted genet
- Lion
- African wildcat
- Caracal
- Serval
- Small-spotted cat
- Felid species
- Honey badger
- Striped polecat
- Striped weasel
- Black-backed jackal
- Bat-eared fox
- Wild dog
- Cape fox
- Aardwolf
- Brown hyaena

- Ground squirrel
- Tree squirrel
- Greater cane rat
- Cape hyrax
- Chacma baboon
- Warthog
- Impala
- Duiker
- Steenbok
- Kudu
- Eland
- Blesbok
- Bushbok
- Reedbuck
- Springbuck
- Burchell's zebra
- Herbivore species
- Scrub hare
- Unknown species



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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## What is rabies?

Rabies is a contagious and deadly viral disease causing damage to the brain and the spinal cord.

It affects both humans and animals.

It results in death once disease symptoms develop.

## How is rabies spread?

The rabies virus is found in the saliva and nervous tissue of infected animals.

It is transmitted to humans and other animals through contact with saliva or tissue of infected animals (i.e. **bites, scratches, licks on broken skin and mucous membranes**).

## What are the symptoms of rabies in humans?

Rabies symptoms may occur as early as one week and as late as several years after contact with or bite from an infected animal. Once symptoms of the disease develop, rabies becomes fatal to both humans and animals. **Seek treatment immediately. Do not wait for symptoms to develop.**

## The symptoms of rabies in humans include:

- Headache and fever
- Irritability, restlessness and anxiety
- Muscle pains, malaise and hydrophobia (fear of water) and vomiting
- Hoarse voice
- Paralysis
- Mental disorder
- Profuse salivation
- Difficult swallowing

## What to do following a bite or contact with a suspected rabid animal?

If you have been bitten or had contact with a dog or stray animal, or a pet or farm animal that is behaving strangely, follow these steps:

- Wash the wound with clean water and soap immediately for at least 10 minutes.
- Apply an antiseptic ethanol or iodine.
- **Immediately consult a doctor or clinic for treatment and advice.**
- Contact your nearest state veterinarian or animal clinic.

## When should you suspect that an animal is infected with rabies?

Suspect that an animal is infected with rabies when:

- It shows behavioral changes such as restlessness, irritability, excitability, and shyness,
- A domestic animal comes home with injuries of unknown origin.

## How do animals become infected?

Wild and domestic animals can become infected by:

- Being bitten by an infected animal.
- A fight between a pet and an unknown / stray animal, which could take place even across fences.

## How is rabies controlled?

- Immediately isolate the suspected animal and inform your State Veterinarian or Animal Health Technician.
- Have your dogs and cats vaccinated regularly (all pets three months or older must be vaccinated and receive a booster within nine months, after that only annual boosters are required).
- Do not allow your pets to roam the streets.
- Rabies is a dangerous infection. Animals suspected to be suffering from rabies must never be handled under any circumstances.
- Report all suspected rabid animals to your nearest state veterinarian, animal health technician or to the police.

## Remember rabies can be prevented by:

- Vaccinating your animals.
- Seeking treatment immediately following contact with a suspected rabid animal.

**N.B.: 1. Do not wait for symptoms to develop  
2. There is no effective treatment for human rabies once symptoms develop.**

## Where can you get more information?

- For more information please contact your nearest clinic or health care center or state veterinarian.



**STOP RABIES NOW!**

.....**BECAUSE YOU CAN**.....

