

BEWARE OF RABIES!

Baie-Comeau, July 1st, 2021 – The Direction de santé publique de la Côte-Nord wants to invite the population and visitors to be vigilant around wild and domestic animals, in order to prevent being infected by the rabies virus.

Rabies is transmitted to humans through a bite, a scratch or the saliva of an infected animal coming into contact with a fresh wound or the mucous membrane of the eyes, nose or mouth. Dogs, foxes, raccoons and bats are the animals most likely to be infected by rabies, but other wild and domestic animals can also catch rabies if they are scratched by an infected animal or if they come into contact with their saliva through a bite.

Prevention measures

Follow these measures at all times around wild animals and unknown domestic animals, to prevent infections:

- Never approach or feed wild, unknown or stray animals.
- Never try to tame wild animals.
- Vaccinate your domestic cats and dogs against rabies.
- Consult a veterinarian if your pet shows symptoms consistent with rabies, such as a change in behaviour (unusual aggressiveness, disorientation, dejection or isolation) or paralysis.
- Teach children the safe behaviour to adopt with animals and make sure they apply them.

If you are bitten

Rabies is a contagious and fatal disease. There are no effective treatment to cure rabies after the onset of the first symptoms (fever, fatigue, shivers, insomnia, loss of appetite, headaches, irritability). From the moment symptoms appear, death is inevitable. The disease can be prevented by receiving a vaccine against rabies quickly after a bite or after coming into contact with the saliva of an infected animal.

You must therefore act quickly to prevent the onset of symptoms after being bitten, scratched or coming into contact with the saliva of a potentially infected animal. If you believe you were in contact with the rabies virus through a wild or domestic animal, call **Info-Santé 811** as soon as possible. For more information about rabies, visit Quebec.ca.

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