

## How dangerous is the bite?

People will ask you if the bite is dangerous. A bite can cause illness only if the animal itself is infected. First symptoms of rabies in bitten person may appear early within 10 days or more after the bite.

Rabies infection is likely if a pet dog dies within 10 days of the bite or if it shows any signs of rabies. Even a scratch on the skin may give rabies infection. Each wound is important. We can decide the risk of exposure as follows:

**Mild:** Licks on normal skin, scratches without blood, drinking raw milk of suspect cattle.

**Moderate:** Licks on fresh cuts, scratches with blood oozing, minor wounds fewer than five, all wounds except those on face, neck, head, palms and fingers.

**Severe:** All bites and scratches with oozing blood on neck, face, palms, fingers, face and head, Lacerated wounds on any part of body, wounds more than five, bites of wild animals.

If the biting animal is not seen or around, the case should be treated as severe.

Bite or saliva of a rabies patient is also infective. The effect of ARV reduces after a period of six months, so for any further occasions of dog-bite, fresh vaccination is necessary.

## Rabies in dogs: Abnormal behaviour

Identifying and killing rabid dogs is essential. Remember that there are two types of rabid dogs – the aggressive and the silent. The aggressive

