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Rabies, Human  
1997 Case Definition  
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1997 Case Definition  
NOTE:  
A surveillance case definition is a set of uniform criteria used to define a disease for public health surveillance. Surveillance case definitions enable public health officials to classify and count cases consistently across reporting jurisdictions. Surveillance case definitions are not intended to be used by healthcare providers for making a clinical diagnosis or determining how to meet an individual patient’s health needs.  
Clinical Description  
Rabies is an acute encephalomyelitis that almost always progresses to coma or death within 10 days after the first symptom.  
Laboratory Criteria For Diagnosis  
Detection by direct fluorescent antibody of viral antigens in a clinical specimen (preferably the brain or the nerves surrounding hair follicles in the nape of the neck),  
OR  
Isolation (in cell culture or in a laboratory animal) of rabies virus from saliva, cerebrospinal fluid (CSF), or central nervous system tissue,  
OR  
Identification of a rabies-neutralizing antibody titer greater than or equal to 5 (complete neutralization) in the serum or CSF of an unvaccinated person.  
Case Classification  
Confirmed  
A clinically compatible case that is laboratory confirmed  
Comments  
Laboratory confirmation by all of the above methods is strongly recommended.  
The 1997 case definition appearing on this page was previously published in the 1990  
MMWR  
Recommendations and Reports titled  
Case Definitions for Public Health Surveillance  
.  
1  
Thus, the 1990 and 1997 versions of the case definition are identical.  
References  
CDC. (1990). Case Definitions for Public Health Surveillance.  
MMWR  
, 39(RR-13), 1-43.  
https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00025629.htm  
Related Case Definition(s)  
Rabies, Human | 2011 Case Definition  
Rabies, Human | 2010 Case Definition  
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NNDSS receives and shares case data from state, local, and territorial health departments to help public health monitor, control, and prevent serious diseases.  
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