

Government launches National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP)

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In news– The Central Government has launched the National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP) for prevention and control of Rabies.

The Strategies of the National Rabies Control Program are as follows:

- Provision of rabies vaccine & rabies immunoglobulin through national free drug initiatives.
- Training on appropriate animal bite management, prevention and control of rabies, surveillance and intersectoral coordination.
- Strengthening surveillance of animal bites and rabies deaths reporting.
- Creating awareness about rabies prevention.

About Rabies-

- Rabies is a vaccine-preventable, **zoonotic, viral disease**.
- It is one of the **Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD)** that predominantly affects poor and vulnerable populations who live in remote rural locations.
- **It is present on all continents, except Antarctica**, with over 95% of human deaths occurring in the Asia and Africa regions.
- Initial **symptoms of rabies include a fever with pain and unusual or unexplained tingling, pricking**, or burning sensation (paraesthesia) at the wound site.
- As the virus spreads to the central nervous system, progressive and fatal inflammation of the brain and

spinal cord develops.

- Transmission can also occur if saliva of infected animals comes into direct contact with human mucosa or fresh skin wounds.
- **It is spread to people and animals through bites or scratches, usually via saliva.**
- Once clinical symptoms appear, rabies is virtually 100% fatal.
- In up to 99% of cases, domestic dogs are responsible for rabies virus transmission to humans.
- Rabies can affect both domestic and wild animals.
- Interrupting transmission is feasible through vaccination of dogs and prevention of dog bites.
- 40% of people bitten by suspect rabid animals are children under 15 years of age.
- Immediate, thorough wound washing with soap and water after contact with a suspect rabid animal is crucial and can save lives.
- WHO leads the collective “United Against Rabies” to drive progress towards “Zero human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030”.