

# **RABIES KILLS!**

## **VACCINATE YOUR DOG TODAY!!!**



**Rabies is a fatal disease caused by a virus which affects the nervous system of all mammals including man. The rabies virus has been associated with animal bites of more than 3000 years. Rabies is endemic throughout South Africa and is responsible for between 10 and 30 confirmed human deaths annually.**

### **HOW IS RABIES SPREAD?**

The rabies virus is found in the saliva of infected animals. The virus is transmitted through the bite of an infected animal, or through saliva contamination of the mucous membranes. The rabies virus does not penetrate intact skin. The virus then travels along the nerves until it reaches the central nervous system, the spinal cord, the brain and from there, it reaches the salivary glands and is then shed into the saliva.

### **WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF RABIES?**

Dogs may show aggression and try to attack other animals, cars, fences and people. They may bark for no reason; seem as though they have a bone stuck in their throat, salivate and may show paralysis of the lower jaw. They eventually show signs of paralysis in the hind legs and then die. Cattle get excited, bellow a lot, salivate, may become aggressive and show signs of paralysis before dying. Wild animals infected with rabies may seem tame and even come into houses. Sheep and goats may seem excited, become aggressive, chew stones, become paralyzed and then die.

### **RABIES IN MAN**

If a rabid animal bites a person, the wound needs to be washed immediately with soap and running water. Take the person to the clinic immediately for treatment. It is important to complete the treatment in order to prevent Rabies. If one does not seek treatment and the person becomes infected with Rabies, that person WILL die – there is no cure!

### **CAN RABIES BE TREATED?**

Once the symptoms of Rabies are seen, there is no treatment.

### **CAN RABIES BE CONTROLLED?**

Yes. All cats and dogs over the age of 3 months should be vaccinated every year against Rabies. Contact your State Veterinarian or Animal Health Technician for assistance with these vaccinations and keep your family safe.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT AN ANIMAL IS RABID**

Do not handle the animal. If possible, confine the animal so that the authorities are able to catch it for testing. Contact your nearest State Veterinarian, Animal Health Technician, Police Station or Health Department.