

2021



WORLD RABIES DAY

RABIES, A SERIOUS ONE HEALTH PROBLEM SAYS VETERINARIANS AND PHYSICIANS WVA/WMA JOINT PRESS RELEASE

A reminder has been issued today by the World Veterinary Association and the World Medical Association that rabies continues to be a serious public health problem in more than 150 countries around the world. It is particularly important in children, who are disproportionately affected by dog bites.

In a joint statement to mark World Rabies Day 2021, the two organisations note that 59,000 people die annually from rabies, of whom 40% are children. The majority of victims are from rural communities in the regions of Africa and Asia.

To combat this terrible infection, affected communities require integrated systems to adequately respond to outbreaks of this zoonotic disease.

The statement adds: 'The Covid-19 pandemic shows us once again the importance of a One Health-based approach in setting up a successful strategy to protect human, animal and environmental health. The real challenge; however, is putting this concept into practice, especially in rural and low-income areas. The same is true for rabies; effective vaccines and proven control strategies are available but are hard to deliver or implement where they are most needed'.

Dr Patricia Turner, World Veterinary Association (WVA) President, said; *'Approximately 97% of documented human cases are attributable to dog bites and can be prevented by vaccinating at least 70% of dogs in high-risk areas. The ultimate goal is to control and eliminate dog-mediated rabies, which is one of the few communicable diseases that can be eliminated using currently available vaccines and tools for veterinary and public health interventions'.*

Dr David Barbe, World Medical Association (WMA) President, said; *'To prevent human rabies deaths by 2030, a variety of strategies are being combined: through pre-and post-exposure prophylaxis, mass community dog vaccination, surveillance and epidemiology, enhancing laboratory diagnostic capability, increasing public awareness and risk communication, educating communities and professionals, enacting supportive legislation, improving dog population management, and establishing as well as protecting rabies-free zones. During World Rabies Day, these undertakings are being highlighted and promoted'.*



RABIES ENDS HERE

WVA and WMA invite you to [join](#) the
#RabiesEndsHere campaign

<http://worldvet.org/>

<https://www.wma.net/>