



# ASSOCIATION FOR PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF RABIES IN INDIA (APCRI)

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08.09.2011

Dear Member,

**Sub :** Together We Can Make Rabies, History with World Rabies Day

APCRI urges each member to observe 'World Rabies Day 2011'. A terrible yet preventable disease, Rabies has the highest case fatality rate of any infectious disease known to man. Although rabies is a very under-reported disease, WHO estimates that one person dies of rabies every 10 minutes. This adds up to 55,000 reported deaths per year and about 36% of them (20,000) are reported from India.

World Rabies Day is an initiative started in 2006 by GARC, to raise awareness about Rabies and is observed on September 28<sup>th</sup>. APCRI is a partner of the Global Alliance for Rabies Control.

The objectives of World Rabies Day are to raise awareness about Rabies, promote education in local communities and mobilize resources toward human rabies prevention and animal rabies control.

**On Sept. 28, or during the week starting 25<sup>th</sup> September, please organize and conduct programmes locally, coordinating with health & veterinary departments, NGOs and Private organizations. Tell the world "Rabies is preventable!"**

This year, World Rabies Day is focusing on 'notification'. In many rabies endemic nations, it is not compulsory to report rabies deaths. In many others, the requirement is not carried out. Without proper records, the scale of the problem continues to be underestimated and people and animals continue to die from this preventable disease.

**Please download the APCRI – WRD banner from our website [www.apcri.org](http://www.apcri.org), use it for your activity and send back the report of your activities to my mail at the earliest.**

Let us join hands to observe World Rabies Day (September 28) or World Rabies Week (September 25 – 30)

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully

Prof (Dr) Thomas Mathew  
Secretary General – APCRI

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## WORLD RABIES DAY September 28, 2011

- Wash Bite Wounds - Get Prompt Medical Care After a Bite - Vaccinate Animals

### Importance of WRD

Rabies in humans is completely preventable. Yet, more than 55,000 people, mostly in Africa and Asia, die from rabies every year - a rate of one person every ten minutes. This is three times the number of people that died from the H1N1 influenza (swine flu) pandemic in 2009. The most important global source of rabies in humans is from uncontrolled rabies in dogs. Children are often at greatest risk from rabies. This year the World Rabies Day is on Wednesday, September 28th. The goal is to raise awareness about the impact of human and animal rabies and how easy it is to prevent it.

Rabies, a zoonotic viral disease, infects domestic and wild animals and is transmitted to other animals and humans through close contact with saliva from infected animals (i.e. bites, scratches, licks on broken skin and mucous membranes). Once disease symptoms develop, rabies is fatal to both animals and humans. The vast majority of these deaths occur in Asia and Africa. Children are at particular risk.

More than three billion people — about half the world's population — live in countries where dog rabies still exists and are potentially exposed to this deadly, but preventable, disease.

Our goal is to provide a sustainable rabies prevention strategy for communities in canine rabies endemic countries that takes into account how people interact with community dogs and other animals in their environment.

As a part of WRD initiative, we have to ensure that

- Prompt and appropriate post-exposure treatment is administered to people who have been exposed to rabies.
- pre-exposure vaccination is given to people who are at a high risk of infection

### Facts

- 60% of rabies deaths are in children under the age of 15
- 95% of rabies deaths occur in Africa and Asia, mostly in rural areas.
- Many of the bite victims don't seek medical attention
- Often families turn to traditional healers – but their remedies will not work against this fatal disease
- Most victims already live in poverty without ready access to healthcare or information through the media

In a rural or tribal area when somebody gets scratched or bitten by one of the many dogs that roam freely, they have to travel some distance to get treatment. If the nearest medical centre is a few hours drive, just getting there is a challenge. And it's a race against time. Once somebody has been exposed to Rabies, they need to receive treatment as soon as possible.

We have to give people information that could save their lives, taking care to present it in innovative and culturally sensitive ways.

Children (5 - 15 years old) are a main focus group because they are most at risk of exposure to rabies and because they are effective at spreading information to their families and communities.

For more details Visit the GARC website <http://www.rabiescontrol.net>