

Blue Cross of Hyderabad

RABIES:

Rabies is caused by a **virus** and transmitted by close contact with saliva from infected animals (i.e. bites, licks on broken skin and mucous membranes). Once symptoms of the disease develop, rabies is fatal. Rabies is common in most parts of the world.

However, Rabies can be prevented by vaccination.

WHO studies show that when 70% of the dog population is covered by the anti-rabies vaccination, the disease can be eradicated. Rabies vaccine is also curative if given post-exposure before the manifestation of clinical symptoms. So please ensure your pets vaccination is up to date and keep a record of it. Make sure you have your local stray dogs vaccinated as well.

Some safe measures to take to ensure Rabies eradication:

1. Make sure your pet is vaccinated against Rabies annually.
2. Sterilize your pet before the age of 1 year so that it will not roam and get into fights with street dogs. The breeding cycle makes a pet aggressive and irritable, which makes it bite. Rabies is communicated during dog fights, by biting.
3. If you intend to breed your dog, make sure you register as a breeder.
4. Set up an ABC/AR effort in your community to ensure all the local stray dogs are caught for sterilization and vaccination by the GHMC.
5. Start an adoption effort and have all the stray puppies adopted into good homes so they are off the streets. Don't breed or buy when homeless animals die! Blue Cross can help you with this.
6. Spread awareness of what to do if a dog bites: First aid can save lives!

Wash the wound well: If ever you, or someone you know, get bitten by a dog, quickly wash the wound with running water and strong washing soap for at least 10 minutes. Apply an antiseptic, like betadine, and go see your doctor immediately. Check if the dog has been vaccinated for Rabies. You may need to take a course of 5 anti-rabies injections.

You may ask what do we do about stray dogs? Aren't they dangerous?

Stray dogs breed because of our garbage. After resorting to killing them for decades it was found that killing has never solved the problem as new dogs come to fill the vacuum (as the garbage is still there). In fact, killing is more dangerous as the new dogs migrating from rural areas, city outskirts etc, are feral in nature, may carry Rabies, attack, bite or breed. Dogs breed very fast! It is estimated that **1 Breeding pair of dogs can give rise to 2000 homeless dogs in their lifetime.**

Hence, the Government of India Stray Animal Control Rules state that Municipalities must sterilize and vaccinate stray dogs to reduce the population and control Rabies.

Do not be afraid. All dogs do not bite. In fact the majority of dog population are loyal and faithful to mankind. We can use them to protect ourselves from Rabies.

Contact your local authority or Animal Welfare organization to get such a program started – it has good results! For example, cities like Jaipur and Chennai have achieved rabies-free status thanks to the Animal Birth Control –Anti Rabies programme.



Understanding How To Behave Around Dogs (Do's And Don'ts)

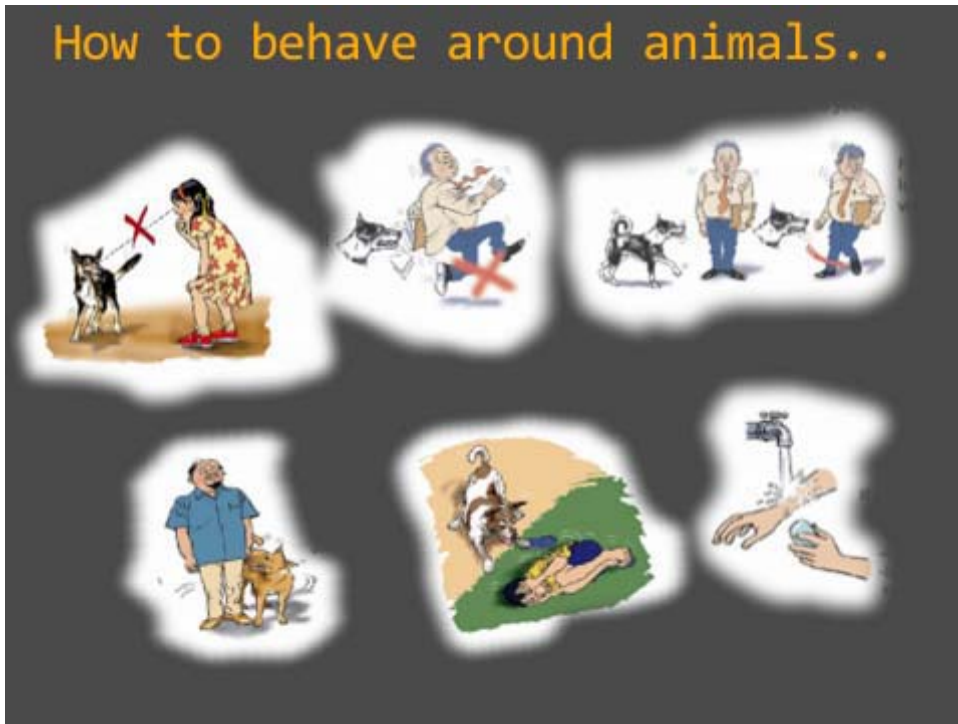
A dog can be Man's best friend. All dogs do not bite. However, many people have fears or phobias that translate into hatred for dogs or a desire to eradicate them. This could be from an unfortunate incident they witnessed or a dog bite history. Understanding animal behaviour, helps us overcome fear and creates confidence to deal with animals.

A dog doesn't like to be disturbed when eating, sleeping or caring for her pups. Dogs that are tied become bad tempered and irritable because it prefers to be free, just like we do.

Here are some rules you can follow to protect yourself from being bitten by dogs:

- Always keep your pet's Anti-Rabies vaccinations up to date. A vaccinated pet is a healthy pet.
- Sterilize your pet before it's a year old. This is good for the pet as it becomes calm and stable and will not turn aggressive.
- Don't run around strange animals while playing – dogs love to chase you if you run. This does not mean they will bite however. Carry a stick with you and walk confidently in the opposite direction.
- When walking, do not go near an unknown pet dog that is tied up. Walk around it.

- Never try to play with puppies of a dog you do not know - the mother could bite to protect her pups.
- Never tease animals - they can bite you when teased.



How To Behave Around Dogs:

Despite our care around animals, dogs especially pet dogs that are ferocious can intimidate or bite us. It helps to know how to behave around dogs that are aggressive. When dealing with dogs, remember they smell and hear 300 odd times better than us!

- Remember, all dogs do not bite! But sometimes a pet dog can get very territorial and aggressive. When a dog is wagging its tail and bowing or dipping at you, this means it is very friendly and is calling you to play! But when a dog raises the hair on its neck (hackles) and growls at you or snarls (bares its teeth at you) this means that it is not a friendly dog. Be careful and do not approach it at all.

Remember:

- **Don't stare:** Never stare at a dog in the eyes. Dogs consider this an act of aggression.
- **Stand still:** If an aggressive dog approaches you, stand still like a tree. If it sniffs you, don't be scared. Sniffing is its way to find out who you are. Sudden moves can startle it into biting you. Look the other way.
- **Don't run:** Do not run from a growling, aggressive dog! It will chase you and bite you! All dogs love a good chase. Walk slowly away from the dog in a safe direction without looking at it.
- **Cover yourself:** If a dog attacks you for any reason, cover your face with your arms like in the picture, roll into a tight ball protecting your body with your legs to avoid it biting your face or stomach.

Adopt a Homeless Animal! Don't breed or buy when homeless animals die!



**Have your local stray dogs sterilized and vaccinated against Rabies.
Let's make Hyderabad Rabies Free!**