Animals may be cute, but interacting with them while traveling can be a serious health risk for rabies. Rabies is transmitted from the saliva of an infected animal. Dogs are responsible for most rabies deaths in the world, although any mammal can have rabies. Bats, monkeys, rodents, cats and other animals can cause rabies as well as other infectious diseases.

Rabies is almost always fatal if not treated promptly with rabies shots. Appropriate rabies vaccines may be difficult for travelers to obtain abroad.

Never try to pet, handle, or feed unfamiliar animals, even pets.

### Before Travel
Consider getting pre-immunized for rabies. By getting vaccinated before travel, not only are you well prepared but you reduce the chance of receiving the incorrect post-bite care.

#### Rabies Pre-Exposure Vaccination Series
- Three doses of intramuscular rabies vaccine before travel, day 0, day 7 and day 21-28.
- In case of possible rabies exposure, two more boosters are needed on days 0 and 3.
- Human rabies immune globulin (HRIG) is not needed, and often not available abroad.
- If the entire three dose series is not completed before travel, you are not considered fully immunized and should follow guidelines for post-exposure vaccination if bitten.

### POST-EXPOSURE GUIDELINES

#### Immunoglobulin
- HRIG (Human Rabies Immunoglobulin) injected at site of bite as much as feasible, and the rest into the deltoid muscle (shoulder). **THIS IS PREFERRED.**
- OR
  - ERIG: Equine rabies immune globulin purified ERIG has been used abroad, but unpurified ERIG is not recommended, due to more side effects

#### Vaccine
- Four doses of rabies vaccine in the deltoid muscle: Day 0, 3, 7, 14
- WHO recognizes other schedules and methods of administration (such as intradermal), as there is relative shortage of vaccine needed in low resource countries; however, CDC guidelines for post-exposure prophylaxis are preferred for travelers.
- Vaccine failures have occurred in those who did not have their wound cleansed with soap and water, did not receive their rabies vaccine injections in the deltoid area (vaccine was administered in gluteal area), or did not receive RIG around the wound site.

**GET THE RIGHT VACCINE**

- Record the names of the products used
- Ask for the box or take a photo

**Modern Cell Culture Vaccines:**
- HDCV: Human diploid cell vaccine  
  Imovax® by Novartis in US
- Rabivac®
- PCEC: Purified chick embryo cell vaccine  
  RabAvert® by Sanofi Pasteur in US  
  Rabipur®
- PVRV: Purified vero cell rabies vaccine  
  Verorab®  
  Imovax-Rabies vero®
- TRC Verorab®
- PDEV: Purified duck embryo vaccine accepted by WHO  
  Lyssavac-N® (administer in muscle)

Avoid nerve tissue vaccines (NTV), available in some low resource countries

Any other products are not recommended; travelers should travel to where acceptable modern cell culture vaccine and HRIG are available.