



## **Rabies and Risk to Travelers**

*[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC - safer, healthier people.*

Hello, this is Dr. Gary Brunette from CDC in Atlanta, with a few health tips for those planning an international trip filled with outdoor activities. If you are traveling, particularly to parts of Africa, Asia, and Central and South America, you may want to perk up your ears for some reminders about risks and prevention of rabies.

Each year, about 50,000 people around the world die from rabies. Rabies affects the nervous system and nearly always kills people and animals infected with it who do not receive treatment. People get rabies when they are bitten by an infected animal. Dogs and certain wildlife species, such as bats, are most often the source of rabies infections in people, but you should be careful around any animal.

You should be especially careful if you are:

- traveling to areas where rabies is common;
- planning extensive outdoor activities that might put you at higher risk for exposure to animals, such as bicycling, camping, or hiking; or
- traveling with children. Children are considered at higher risk for rabies because they like to play with animals and may not tell you if they have been bitten.

The good news is that you can protect yourself and your family from rabies. All travelers should avoid contact with animals. For example, do not attempt to pick up or pet wild or stray animals. Since pets in some countries do not get rabies shots, you should avoid touching them, as well.

If any animal bites or scratches you, quickly wash the wound with soap and water and see a doctor right away. You may need to have a series of shots to prevent rabies. Some travelers may need to get rabies shots before their trip. Talk to your doctor if you will be participating in high-risk activities or if you are going to an area with a high number of rabies infections. For more information about rabies and travelers, please visit the CDC Travelers' Health website at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel). Thank you.

The CDC Travelers' Health and Animal Importation Branch is pleased to present this travel tip and wishes all travelers a safer, healthier trip.

*[Announcer] To access the most accurate and relevant health information that affects you, your family and your community, please visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).*