

FREQUENCY OF ANIMAL AGGRESSIONS ON HUMANS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PEDREIRAS, MARANHÃO (BRAZIL), FROM JANUARY 2021 TO MAY 2024

Roberto Carlos Negreiros de Arruda; Paola Frassinetti Nunes Machado de Oliveira; Anderson Joaquim Pereira dos Santos; Robert Ferreira Barroso de Carvalho; José Wendel Araujo Soares; Viviane Correia Silva Coimbra; Francisco Borges Costa; Eric Takashi Kamakura de Carvalho Mesquita

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INTRODUCTION

Human rabies is an acute, progressive, and fatal encephalitis observed under the One Health triad of animals, environment, and humans. It requires multisectoral attention and is preventable. Victims of animal attacks are treated by multidisciplinary teams.

Objective: To analyze the occurrence of animal attacks on humans in the municipality of Pedreiras, Maranhão (Brazil).

METHODS

Data on human aggressions caused by domestic and wild animals were provided by the Municipal Health Department of Pedreiras. The municipality, located in Maranhão, covers an area of 288.43 km² and has a population of 37,050 inhabitants.

RESULTS

From January 2021 to May 2024, 1,124 attacks on people were reported: 830 (73.8%) by dogs, 227 (22.9%) by cats, 7 (0.6%) by non-hematophagous bats, 14 (1.2%) by monkeys, 4 (0.4%) by foxes, 5 (0.4%) by pigs, 1 (0.1%) by horses, 1 (0.1%) by raccoons, and 5 (0.4%) by rats. There were no human rabies cases. According to the Brazilian Ministry of Health, dogs and cats are the main sources of infection, followed by bats, monkeys, raccoons, and foxes in rural areas. Production animals represent a medium risk, and rats a low risk. The National Rabies Prophylaxis Program (PNPR), created in 1973, implemented canine and feline rabies vaccination, significantly reducing human rabies mortality rates in Brazil. Prophylaxis includes pre-exposure treatment for individuals at permanent risk and post-exposure treatment for attack victims, involving thorough wound cleaning and administration of Anti-Rabies Serum (SAR) or Human Rabies Immunoglobulin (HRIG). For attacks by bats and wild mammals, four doses of vaccine are administered on days 0, 3, 7, and 14. Preventive actions are shared responsibilities among veterinarians and other health professionals.

CONCLUSION

Dogs and cats are the main aggressors (96.7%) in urban areas, while foxes, monkeys, raccoons, and bats are important in rural areas.