



Shortage of Anti-Rabies Vaccine

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Recently, the **National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)** has asked manufacturers and marketers to increase the stocks of anti-rabies vaccine to address its shortage.

- The shortage is due to lack of firm orders from government and late payments.
- According to the Health Ministry's data, **India is the hotbed of human rabies.**
 - India accounts for more than **one-third of the world's rabies deaths.**
 - Each year, as many as 20,000 people die due to the vaccine-preventable fatality.
 - India has a population of **30 million stray dogs** which cause **96% of rabies in humans.**
- **Rabies**
 - It is caused by a Ribonucleic Acid(RNA) virus that is **present in the saliva** of a rabid animal (dog, cat, monkey, etc).
 - It is invariably transmitted following a bite of a rabid animal that leads to deposition of the saliva and the virus in the wound.
 - The death invariably occurs in **four days to two weeks due to cardio-respiratory failure.**
 - However, the time interval between the bite and occurrence of symptoms/signs of rabies i.e. **incubation period varies from four days to two years or rarely even more.**
 - Thus, it is important to remove the virus from the wound as early as possible by **immediately washing** the wound with water and soap followed by application of antiseptics that reduce/eliminate chances of nerve infection.

National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority

- NPPA is an organization under **Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers** which was **set up in 1997** to revise the prices of controlled bulk drugs and formulations and to enforce prices and availability of the medicines in the country, under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO), 1995.

- The prices are **now fixed/revised** under **Drugs (Prices Control) Order (DPCO), 2013**.
- It also monitors the prices of decontrolled drugs in order to keep them at reasonable levels.

Source: TH