

PROPOSAL FOR ACTION IN AREAS PRESENTING CANINE AND FELINE *DESMODUS ROTUNDUS* TRANSMITTED RABIES CASES.

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Canine and feline rabies has significantly decreased since 1995 in the State of São Paulo, due to measures implemented by the São Paulo State Rabies Control Program Coordination. In 1995, 169 cases of rabies occurred; in 1996, 104 cases; in 1997, 11 cases; in 1998, 7 cases; in 1999, 5 cases and up to August 2000, 2 cases. Instituto Pasteur, the headquarters of the Program Coordination and Reference Laboratory for Brazil, uses a panel of 8 monoclonal antibodies and the indirect immunofluorescence test for identifying the transmitter species of rabies cases. We used the monoclonal antibody immunofluorescence test in 9 of the last 14 canine and feline rabies cases, making it possible to recognize variant 3 (*Desmodus rotundus* — hematophagous bat) in 8 of these samples, of which 7 in dogs and 1 in a cat. This investigation aims to propose actions for controlling canine and feline rabies transmitted by hematophagous bats. The first step to be taken is to describe the region: urban, suburban or borderline, and rural. When a case is described in an urban area, epidemiological investigation should be immediately initiated for detecting human and animal contacts, identifying possible shelters and colonies of *Desmodus rotundus* and identifying other animal species aiming to control the canine and feline reservoirs. If the identified region is suburban, it should be described from the epidemiological point of view (controlled, non-controlled or silent). If it is a controlled area, the recommended actions are identical to those for urban areas. For non-controlled and silent areas epidemiological investigation and the control of dog, cat and herbivorous reservoirs is recommended. Rural areas should also be described epidemiologically (sporadic, alert, endemic or epidemic areas). In sporadic and alert areas the recommended actions are identical to those of urban areas. In endemic and epidemic areas epidemiological investigation, reservoir control, description of the distribution of herbivorous, recording of *Desmodus rotundus* shelters, and systematic herbivorous vaccination should be carried out.