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Original Article

Investigation of Human Exposure and Rabies Postexposure Treatment to Gem-Faced Civets And Ferret-Badgers in Taiwan, 2014

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Abstract

Gem-faced civets was first tested positive for rabies in Taiwan on December 24, 2014, while ferret-badger had been known for carrying rabies since 2012. This report compares patients' post exposure to either a rabies-carrying gem-faced civet or ferret-badger and identifies the characteristics of patients and their exposure conditions. In 2014, patients who had received >1 dose of vaccine for rabies were then followed up with a questionnaire and interviewed by telephone. A total of 57 patients completed the interviews, of which 38 (67%) were male. The median age was 51 years of age (age range 17-82). A significantly higher of respondents were exposed to a ferret- badger (n=33, 58%) than exposed to a gem-faced civet (n=24, 42%) and in latter case, most were male (22 or 92%) and younger. The wounds mostly located on the upper limbs and were caused by attacks due to provocation. Respondents who had been in contact with a gem-faced civet were less likely to develop rabies-like symptoms than injured by a ferret-badger. Prevention effort should be focused on warning people from approaching gem-faced civets and ferret-badgers. Attacks caused by provocation was the leading cause of possible exposure to rabies, however, appropriate wound management after exposure could reduce the risk of being infected.

Keywords: Rabies, post-exposure prevention (PEP), gem-faced civets, ferret-badgers

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