



Emerging and Reemerging Infectious Diseases, Region of the Americas

Vol. 2, No. 15—15 April 2004

Follow-Up on Outbreak of Bat-Transmitted Human Rabies in Pará State, Brazil

To follow up on the outbreak of bat-transmitted human rabies detected in the city of Portel, state of Pará, Brazil, in January 2004, the last report on 8 April indicates that 8 cases have been confirmed since our update of 2 April, bringing the total to 13 cases of confirmed human rabies. Another 4 people are considered suspected cases (see Table 1), of which 2 have died. Test results will be available shortly.

Among the new confirmed cases, the first occurred on 2 March (instead of 4 March, as indicated in last week's update) and the last on 1 April (instead of 26 March).

This situation constitutes the largest reported outbreak of human rabies transmitted by bats in the entire country. The causes of this extremely rare event are currently being investigated by the Department of Health of the state of Pará, the Department of Health Surveillance and the state Department of Agriculture. The bat attacks occurred mainly during the months of September and October 2003. In the meantime, these episodes have been frequent in the rural area of the Acuti Pereira River, where the affected persons reside. Initial evaluations indicate the existence of more than one colony of bats in the affected localities.

There are ongoing investigations of new cases and of prevention, control, and treatment activities among the human population either affected or at risk. In addition, there has been continued vaccination of dogs and cats in the affected area, which has been

Table 1: Number of Human Cases and Deaths from the Rabies Virus (municipality of Portel, state of Pará, Brazil, as of 8 April 2004)

	Cases	Deaths
Confirmed	13	13
Suspected	4	2
Ruled out	3	0
Total	20	15

Note: The number of deaths is included in the number of cases.

Source: Reports to PAHO from the Department of Health, Pará (*Secretária da Saúde, Pará/SES-PA*) and the Department of Health Surveillance (*Secretária de Vigilância em Saúde/SVS*), Brazil.

extended to include three nearby cities considered at risk. Other domestic animals are also being vaccinated.

For more PAHO information, see the [PAHO Rabies Page](#) and the update on "Human Rabies Transmitted by Bats in Pará State, Brazil" in the April 2 issue of [EID Weekly Updates](#).

Sources: Reports to PAHO from the Department of Health, Pará (Secretária da Saúde, Pará/SES-PA) and the Department of Health Surveillance (Secretária de Vigilância em Saúde/SVS), Brazil.