

ROLE OF STRAY DOGS IN THE TRANSMISSION OF DISEASES TO HUMANS

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INTRODUCTION

In today's society pets have become part of our family but this has gone hand in hand with an increase in the number of abandoned animals. This entails a risk as they can be a source of disease for humans, known as zoonoses. Specifically in abandoned animals the prevalence of zoonoses is higher and they play a role in the maintenance of pathogens.

In the recent years there has been an increase in emerging and re-emerging zoonoses due to ecological, climatic and socio-cultural changes. About 200 zoonoses have been characterized and the dog is capable to transmit 53 of them. It is estimated that 60% of all human infectious diseases are zoonotic and that at least 75% of the pathogens of emerging infectious diseases are of animal origin. In Spain there has been an increase of cases by 46% since 2014.

In Spain the abandonment rate is 17 dogs and 10 cats out of 1.000

About 69,9% of stray dogs are parasitized

ZOONOSES

According to the WHO (World Health Organization) a zoonose is an infectious disease that is transmitted naturally from animals to humans. These agents can be transmitted by different routes: ingestion, direct contact, inhalation, vector bites, etc.

Parasitic:

- Cryptosporidiosis
- Giardiasis
- Scabies
- Toxoplasmosis
- Toxocariasis
- Leishmaniasis

Virus:

- Rabies

Fungal:

- Dermatofitosis

Bacterial:

- Lyme disease
- Boutonneuse fever
- Dog/cat bites
- Cat scratch disease
- Leptospirosis
- Campylobacteriosis
- Salmonellosis

In a questionnaire of 150 pets owners in Barcelona between 56%-77% didn't know what a zoonose is

PREVENTION

- To inform the population about zoonoses and prevention measures
- Stray dog population control:
 - Responsible ownership
 - Reproductive control
 - Shelters
- Monitoring

CONCLUSIONS

There has been an increase in emerging and re-emerging zoonoses

The prevalence of diseases is higher in stray dogs and favours the maintenance of zoonoses

Population is not aware of the risk that animals pose to their health and how to prevent it

It is necessary to improve prevention measures such as better population information, stray dogs population control and the implementation of monitoring programs

