

Virginia Cat Tests Positive for Rabies

Girl who was attacked by stray undergoes treatment.

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Virginia health officials urge people not to pick up stray animals and to be cautious if they see animals in their yard acting strangely. An 11-year-old girl from Southampton County, Va., has been receiving rabies shots after the stray cat that attacked her was confirmed to be rabid, health officials said Friday.

The cat tested positive for rabies Saturday, Aug. 30, according to Brandon Applewhite, environmental health specialist with the Virginia Department of Health. He said the girl was either bitten or scratched by the cat in the yard on Aug. 26.

The cat was caught in order to be placed under quarantine for 10 days and died four days later, Applewhite said. The girl's doctor immediately started her on rabies shots when the cat was confirmed to have the disease.

"We all know that rabies is out there and wild animals carry it," Applewhite said. "Don't go picking up stray animals."

Health officials urge the public to be cautious if they do see animals in the yard acting strangely. They also recommend that pet owners not feed their animals outdoors in order to avoid attracting strays.