

Is Mad Cow Disease Misdiagnosed Rabies?

A New Theory of Mad Cow Disease

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### Abstract

This article proposes a novel theory, suggesting that the true cause of mad cow disease is cattle consuming the flesh of rabid cattle. Since rabid cattle do not always show outward signs of rabies, such as foaming at the mouth, stumbling, aggression, etc, deceased animals used for cattle feed may be introduced into the food supply. When not properly processed, the rabies virus can survive and be transferred into uninfected animals via cattle feed. The low dose of infection and means of infection may explain the slow progression of mad cow within the infected animals. Since mad cow disease and rabies alike are primarily transmitted via contact with infected animal flesh / fluids, it is the contention of this brief article that only grass and grain feed should be given to livestock.

### Is Mad Cow Disease Misdiagnosed Rabies?

Mad cow disease or bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), is a fatal neurodegenerative disease in cattle that causes degeneration in the brain and spinal cord. Although it is viewed as new disease, the father of modern medicine, Hippocrates wrote of a mad cow like disease in cattle and humans thousands of years ago. The disease may be most easily transmitted to human beings by eating food contaminated with the brain, spinal cord or digestive tract of infected carcasses. The disease has been shown to be caused by feeding the flesh of infected cattle to livestock. While mad cow is believed to be caused by a prion (mutated protein), Wong (2007) suggests that it may actually be viral in origin. This article proposes a novel theory, suggesting that the true cause of mad cow disease is rabies laden livestock feed.

Since rabid cattle do not always show outward signs of rabies, such as foaming at the mouth, stumbling, aggression, etc, deceased animals used for cattle feed may be introduced into the food supply. When not properly processed, the rabies virus can survive and be transferred into uninfected animals via cattle feed. The low dose and means of infection may explain the slow progression of mad cow within the infected animals.

### **Discussion**

Since mad cow disease and rabies alike are primarily transmitted via contact with infected animal flesh / fluids, it is the contention of this brief article that only grass and grain feed should be given to livestock. By avoiding the source of mad cow, the very real threat of transmission of mad cow disease to humans can be virtually eliminated. Alternatively, treating all cattle feed with ultraviolet sources could reduce the risk. Additional research is clearly required on this subject, including if all cattle should be tested for rabies before shipped to processing plants.

Please note that this is merely cursory analysis intended to spark the minds of much better informed researchers.

References

Chong, J. (2007). Virus may be cause of mad cow. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from <http://articles.latimes.com/2007/jan/31/science/sci-prion31>