

Guidelines for Response to an Animal Bite/Rabies for Sheboygan County

Rabies can be passed on to a human, pet or farm animal by a bite or a scratch from a rabid animal. If this occurs, follow-up is essential in order to prevent the spread of rabies. The chart below indicates which animals WI State Lab of Hygiene (WSLH) accepts for rabies testing (left side) and which animals will not be tested for rabies without a doctor's order (right side). If there is any question about species of animal and whether to test and/or administer prophylaxis, always consult with DHFS.

Submit for Testing Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) can generally wait until testing or quarantine is complete			Usually do not carry Rabies Do not Submit	
*Dog (puppy) *Cat (kitten) *Ferret **Cow **Horse **Sheep **Pig **Goat	Mink Skunk Bat ~ Weasel Bobcat Opossum Raccoon Fox	Coyote Muskrat Beaver Woodchuck or Groundhog Wolf or wolf/dog mix Almost any Carnivorous Animal	Rabbit Small Rodents Squirrels Mice Chipmunks Gerbils Hamsters	Guinea Pigs Birds Gophers
* Dogs, Cats and Ferrets can be quarantined for 10 days unless exhibiting signs or rabies **Cows, Horses, Sheep, Pigs and Goats can be quarantined for 30 days unless exhibiting signs of rabies. No need for PEP if animal remains healthy for full quarantine.			Note: Animals in above 2 columns will not be tested unless ordered by a doctor	
~ Furthermore , prophylaxis can be considered for persons who were in the same room as a bat, but who might be unaware that a bite or direct contact had occurred (e.g., if a sleeping person awakens to find a bat in the room, or an adult witnesses a bat in the room with a previously unattended child, mentally disabled person, or intoxicated person). It is important to note that these recommendations regarding post exposure prophylaxis for bat contact exist because of the possibility that a bite or scratch from a bat may go unnoticed due to the patient's age or level of consciousness. They should NOT be construed to mean that simply being in the same area as a bat constitutes an exposure for a competent conscious adult or older child.				

Animals must be submitted to WSLH through a veterinarian. The veterinarian's office is to call Sheboygan County Public Health (920) 459-4382 for WSLH fee exempt number and approved of testing. The name and phone number of the patient's doctor must go on the paper work that accompanies the specimen to the WSLH. When there is an exposure to rabies and the animal is a stray or wild, the cost of preparing, packaging and shipping is the responsibility of the individual exposed. When the animal is an owned animal, the owner is asked to pay for preparation and shipping. If there are concerns with costs for preparation or shipping of specimens, discuss them with the Health Department. Specimens are shipped to WSLH, 465 Henry Mall, Madison, WI 53706. The veterinarian should have the WSLH form and shipping boxes.

Rabies testing on weekends and holidays staff at the SLH are available to receive, log in, and store specimens that are received on Saturdays prior to 3:00 PM. However, testing of specimens that arrive on Saturday is NOT performed until the following Monday unless special arrangements have been made through the Division of Public Health's Communicable Disease Epi Section. Call Jim Kazmierczak (or person on call for Jim) to discuss the need for an off-hours test (note: on weekends and holidays, call DHFS Emergency Hotline at 608-258-0099). DHFS will instruct the WSLH to test or to wait. The criterion DHFS uses for off-hours testing is: *If by doing so they can avoid prophylaxis of the patient.*

A few other points about weekend rabies testing:

- The SLH has found that, in general, private couriers (e.g., UPS, FedEx, Dunham Express) have been more reliable for weekend delivery than the U.S. Postal Service. These couriers also supply tracking numbers which can help locate an errant shipment.
- When shipping a specimen on Friday, one must not only specify "overnight delivery", but also "Saturday delivery".

- When arranging for weekend testing, we will ask you to supply a contact number for the laboratorian to use when calling back the results. This is typically a local public health staffer or a health care provider. The lab will not phone results to the animal owner or exposed patient, but the exposed person should be advised to remain available so that he/she can be contacted. It does no good for a laboratorian to perform after-hours testing unless those results can be transmitted to a PH staffer or a provider who, in turn can contact the patient and help to arrange for prophylaxis if indicated.

Decisions about prophylaxis, tetanus and antibiotics Patients who have been bitten, need to see their doctor about the need for tetanus and antibiotics and to discuss the need for rabies prophylaxis. The bite must be cleaned well with warm water and soap.

How long to wait for prophylaxis There is no unequivocally "safe" period to wait for prophylaxis. In general, if the animal showed no clinical sign of rabies, and the bite was provoked and did not involve wounds to the head/neck, and if the wound was washed promptly and thoroughly with soap and water, it is reasonable to delay prophylaxis for up to 48-72 hours while awaiting test results. Consult with WSLH or DHFS on specific scenarios. If the animal is quarantined and being observed by a veterinarian, prophylaxis is not needed unless the animal shows signs of rabies. The HAN bite flow chart will walk you through most situations at:

<http://hanplus.wisc.edu/DISEASES/rabies/introduction.htm>

Report all animal bites to the Sheriff's Dept. or Police Department even if the animal's owner is unknown. They will issue quarantine on cats, dogs or ferrets and help locate missing owners and animals. Vaccinated cats, dogs and ferrets can be quarantined at the home of the owner. Unvaccinated cats, dogs and ferrets must be quarantined at an isolation facility such as the Humane Society or a Veterinary office. Farm animals can be quarantined on the farm. The owner does have the option of having the cat, dog, ferret or farm animal euthanized and tested rather than quarantined.

Potential Domestic Animal Exposures to Rabid Animals

In situations where a domestic animal (household pet, farm animal, etc.) may have been exposed to another animal suspected of having rabies, the State Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is the responsible agency, and should be consulted for guidance on management and testing of the animal(s) involved. DPH simply refers these situations to DATCP when we are made aware of them, and contacting DATCP directly will expedite the response to them. The responsible official in these instances is Dr. Yvonne Bellay. She may be reached at (608) 224-4888. ss 95.21 states (see <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/stats.html>) that an unimmunized cat or dog is to be confined for 180 days and vaccinated against rabies 155-165 days after exposure to a potentially rabid animal and an immunized cat or dog is to be revaccinated as soon as possible and confined for 60 days. The confinement ends if the potentially rabid animal is determined not rabid through quarantine or testing.

Rabies Vaccine - Doctors who have questions about rabies vaccinations can call Jim Kazmierczak. Rabies vaccine is usually available at all hospital emergency rooms. The WSLH pamphlet "Diagnosis of Rabies" explains the process. Rabies Immune Globulin (RIG) and Rabies Vaccine are administered intramuscularly on day 0 with rabies vaccine administered on days 3, 7, 14 and 28. Day 0 may or may not be the day that the individual was exposed, but it always refers to the day that prophylaxis starts. If it is found that the animal is negative for rabies, treatment can be discontinued.

What if vaccination is not covered by Health Insurance?

In a case where there is no health insurance coverage, Chiron will provide the vaccine at no charge as long as the attending physician agrees to administer it at no charge. Physicians can log onto RxHope.com and complete the online application or they can call the RabAvert toll-free Patient Assistance telephone number, 10800-589-0837, and call center representatives will walk the caller through the entire registration process. RxHope will determine whether the patient qualifies to participate in the program and arrange for product to be delivered to the physician's office.

For more information, please contact Jim Kazmierczak at (608) 266-2154 or kazmijj@dhfs.state.wi.us