Next Steps in Rabies Prevention: Human Exposures

This flowchart can be used by rabies response partners or affected individuals to determine the best next steps in rabies prevention.

“Exposure” is defined as a bite, scratch, or any contact with saliva or brain/nervous tissue through open cuts in the skin, scratches, or mucous membranes. Any possibility of contact with a bat is also considered a risk of rabies exposure, since bites or scratches from a bat can be too small to see or feel. If there is uncertainty around exposure (i.e., bat found in a child’s bedroom), proceed as if an exposure occurred.

What was the nature of the exposure?

Person exposed to wild mammal

- Bat (includes uncertain exposures)
- Raccoon, skunk, fox, or other carnivore
- Squirrel, rabbit, rodents

Person bitten by/exposed to dog, cat or ferret

- Animal remains healthy with no signs of rabies or dies
- Test brain for rabies at UPHL
- End quarantine. PEP is NOT indicated
- Consult with epidemiologist 1-888-EPI-UTAH

Is the animal available for quarantine?

- Yes
  - Report bite to animal control.
  - Do not give PEP.
  - Do not booster the animal’s rabies vaccine.
  - Quarantine dog, cat or ferret for 10 days, regardless of animal vaccine status.
  - Home quarantine acceptable. See separate quarantine requirements.
  - Observe animal for signs of rabies.

- No
  - Report bite to animal control.
  - Do not give PEP.
  - Do not booster the animal’s rabies vaccine.
  - Quarantine dog, cat or ferret for 10 days, regardless of animal vaccine status.
  - Home quarantine acceptable. See separate quarantine requirements.
  - Observe animal for signs of rabies.

Person exposed to wild mammal

- Is the wild mammal available for testing?
  - No
    - START PEP
  - Yes
    - Test POSITIVE
    - PEP is NOT indicated
    - Test NEGATIVE

Person bitten by/exposed to dog, cat or ferret

- Is the bite provoked? (Includes feeding)
  - No
    - START PEP
  - Yes
    - Test NEGATIVE
    - Consult with epidemiologist 1-888-EPI-UTAH

Test brain for rabies at UPHL

Test result POSITIVE

Test result NEGATIVE