

# Recommendations for Managing Human Rabies Exposure\*

For **Bat** Exposures see *Rabies Exposure Management for Bat-related Incidents Flow Chart*, available at [www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/cade/rabies\\_exposure\\_bats.pdf](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/cade/rabies_exposure_bats.pdf)



Animal Species	Situation	Rabies Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) Recommendations
<b>Dogs, cats, ferrets</b>	Animal available for testing or 10 day confinement and observation	If the animal is exhibiting symptoms consistent with rabies, immediately euthanize and test. If the animal is not exhibiting symptoms, a 10 day confinement period can be instituted. If the animal exhibits signs of rabies during the 10 day confinement period, it should be euthanized immediately and tested. If results are positive, unsuitable or indeterminate administer PEP immediately. If the animal does not exhibit clinical signs during the 10 day confinement period, PEP is not recommended, since the animal was not excreting virus at the time of the bite or saliva exposure.
	Animal unavailable (waiting up to 72 hours to capture the animal may be reasonable, assuming the correct animal can be identified)	If the animal is not available for confinement or testing, administer PEP. (If the animal is captured later contact IDPH at 800-362-2736.)
<b>Horses or other farm animals</b>	If the animal exhibits signs of rabies or dies suddenly, test the animal for rabies.	Defer administration of PEP until outcome of testing. If results are positive, unsuitable or indeterminate, administer PEP.
	All other cases, contact IDPH for guidance.	Contact IDPH at 800-362-2736 during business hours or 515-323-4360 after hours.
<b>Skunk, raccoon, fox, coyote</b>	Euthanize and test animal	Defer administration of PEP until outcome of testing. If results are positive, unsuitable or indeterminate administer PEP.
	Animal unavailable for testing	Administer PEP immediately.
<b>Large rodents: such as beavers, muskrats, or groundhogs</b>	Euthanize and test animal	Defer administration of PEP until outcome of testing. If results are positive, unsuitable or indeterminate administer PEP.
	Animal unavailable for testing	Contact IDPH for consultation at 800-362-2736 during business hours or 515-323-4360 after hours.
<b>Small rodent: such as squirrels, hamsters, guinea pigs, gerbils, chipmunks, rats, mice, rabbits, or opossum</b>	Provoked bite and animal behaving normal	No PEP is recommended, as these species almost never carry rabies.
	Unprovoked bite or animal behaving abnormal	Contact IDPH for consultation at 800-362-2736 during business hours or 515-323-4360 after hours.

\* **Exposure:** a bite or saliva/nervous tissue contact to an open wound or mucous membrane

**NOTE:** If the patient was **bitten above the shoulders**, IDPH recommends that the health care provider consider starting PEP immediately. PEP can be discontinued if the animal tests negative for rabies or is healthy at the end of the quarantine period.

Thoroughly wash all wounds with soap and water and, if available, flush with povidone iodine solution (or other virucidal solution). Evaluate tetanus vaccination status, update if needed.

**If questions arise on any of the above information or circumstances related to the exposure are unusual, please contact IDPH for consultation at 800-362-2736 during business hours or 515-323-4360 after hours.**

For additional information, visit [www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/rabies.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/rabies.asp).

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