Yale New Haven Health

Emergency Services

Rabies, Animal Bites & Bats exposure
Guidelines

Original: 12/1983
Last Reviewed: 08/18

Purpose:

To provide care guidelines for patients who have been exposed to animal bites & exposure to bats and present to the emergency department necessitating prophylaxis.

Guidelines for Care / Standard Operating Procedure:

- Evaluate the Patient utilizing the following Prophylaxis chart to determine need of vaccination

- If the exposure merits initiation of rabies vaccine, then administer the first dose in the emergency department ("Rabies Post Exposure Therapy")

- Utilize the Following Workflow for Ordering Subsequent Vaccines in the EMR:
    a. Select "ED Rabies Series, Post Exposure Prophylaxis" Order set in the EMR
    b. Adjust the Dates / Times to Dates subsequent does are required (Cannot Fall on Saturday / Sunday)
    c. Sign & Hold Orders with RN To release
    d. Upon discharge patients should follow up with the hematology oncology infusion therapy clinic (HOIT) at the SRC Campus for subsequent doses

Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Guide		
Animal Type	Evaluation of the Animal	Recommendations
Dog, cat, ferret	Healthy and available for 10 days observation	Should not begin prophylaxis unless animal develops clinical symptoms of rabies*
	Rabid or suspected rabid	**Immediately begin prophylaxis**
	Unknown (i.e. escaped)	Consult public health officials
Skunk, raccoon, fox, , bats†	**Regarded as rabid unless animal proven negative by lab tests‡**	**Immediate prophylaxis**
Livestock, small rodent (rabbits and hares), large rodent (woodchucks and beavers), and other mammals		Consult public health officials. *Rarely require prophylaxis*

*During the 10-day observation period, begin post-exposure prophylaxis at the first sign of rabies in an animal that has bitten someone.

†Post exposure prophylaxis should be initiated as soon as possible following exposure unless the animal is available for testing and public health authorities are facilitating expeditious lab testing or it is already known that brain material from the animal has tested negative. Other factors that might influence urgency include general appearance and behavior of the animal, whether the encounter was provoked by the presence of a human, and the severity and location of bites.

‡The animal should be euthanized as soon as possible. Holding for observation is not recommended.