

SMDHU Rabies Program – New Rabies Resource

Attention: Physicians, Family Health Teams, Nurse Practitioners, Emergency Departments, Urgent Care/Walk-In Clinics

Date: May 3, 2017

New Rabies Resource for Primary Care Providers from Public Health Ontario

Public Health Ontario (PHO) has developed a new guidance document entitled *Management of patients with suspected rabies exposure: Guidance for health care providers working with your local public health unit*. This resource is intended to support health care providers in working with their local public health units when assessing suspected rabies exposures.

The information in this document is organized by the type of animal involved in the exposure and includes flow charts to help guide decision-making. Guidance in this document is based on the Guidance Document for the Management of Suspected Rabies Exposures (Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care) and the rabies chapter of the Canadian Immunization Guide.

As always, please continue to report all mammalian animal bites and scratches to the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) in keeping with the reporting requirements under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, Regulation 557 Communicable Disease – Section 2 (1):

A physician ... or any other person who has information concerning any animal bite or other animal contact that may result in rabies in persons shall, as soon as possible, notify the medical officer of health and provide the medical officer of health with the information.

Timely, optimal health care is essential for the management of animal bites and other exposures of concern, with regard to the prevention of rabies. SMDHU staff are an essential resource to physicians and other health care providers in the management of such animal exposures. As part of this response, the initial and prompt reporting of any animal bite incident provides information that is vital for the public health follow-up and assessment of the risk. Critical control measures to prevent human rabies cases include prompt reporting to public health, medical assessment of the person bitten, and administration of rabies post-exposure treatment when deemed necessary.

SMDHU investigates over 1,000 reported animal bites every year, with subsequent animal quarantines and animal testing for rabies by our health inspectors. Prompt reporting of animal bites to public health ensures immediate public health risk assessment and investigation resulting in reduced need for rabies post-exposure prophylaxis. As a result, less than 100 people have had to complete the rabies post-exposure prophylaxis series each year.

Although the number of positive rabid animals remains low within Simcoe-Muskoka, the health unit considers all animal bite incidents to be possible rabies exposures and investigates all such incidents. For each of the past two consecutive years, there have been one bat testing positive for rabies within the Simcoe Muskoka area, however, raccoon rabies is also present not far from our borders, in the Hamilton/Niagara area. In Ontario, we have seen almost 300 positive cases of rabies in animals last year alone, including raccoons, skunks, foxes and two cats.

We have seen incidents of animal translocation to new areas on vehicles and even on airplanes. This trend, along with the absence of rabies vaccine baiting of wild animals against rabies within Simcoe Muskoka for the past two years reminds us to remain vigilant against all bites and scratches from mammals, and to report all possible exposures to SMDHU for further investigation.

For your convenience, this additional rabies reference document, along with the following rabies related resources for physicians are available on our Primary Care Portal found under the Environmental Health tab - <http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/JFY/PCPortal/PCPCategories/EnvironmentalHealth.aspx>

- Management of patients with suspected rabies exposure
- Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) Dose Schedule (dose and schedule of vaccine and immune globulin)
- Recommendations for Administration of Rabies PEP (administration of the Rabies Vaccine and Immunoglobulin, such as needle size and injection location)
- Guidance Document for the Management of Suspected Rabies Exposures
- Canadian Immunization Guide
- Rabies and Animal Exposure Incident Report (also included with this letter)

Any questions regarding the information presented may be directed to the Rabies Program Line at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 ext. **8894**.

Rabies and Animal Exposure Incident Report

IMMEDIATELY FAX all animal exposure incidents to the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit:

FAX: 705-725-8132

For suspicious animal exposures, and head, face, neck exposures: Phone: (705) or (877) 721-7520 ext. 8811

For the physician inquiries and release of rabies post-exposure prophylaxis: Phone: (705) or (877) 721-7520 ext. 8894

AFTER HOURS, WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS: 1-888-225-7851

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

A REPORT/INTAKE

Date Reported to SMDHU: YYYY/MMM/DD Reporting Location (Name of Hospital/Office/Police): _____
 Contact Person and phone number at Reporting Location for additional file information: _____ Ext: _____

B PATIENT/VICTIM INFORMATION

Name: _____ Legal Sex Male Female X
As found on health card

Parent Guardian Name (if patient is under 16yrs of age): _____

Date of Birth: YYYY/MMM/DD Phone: _____ (Other) _____

Permanent Address: _____
911# Street Name

Temporary Address: _____ Dates Effective: _____
911# Street Name City

C INCIDENT DETAILS

Date of Incident: YYYY/MMM/DD

Details of Incident: _____

Body area affected: _____ Bite Scratch Saliva Handling Other : _____

Skin broken: Yes No

Family Physician: _____ Phone or other contact info: _____

D ANIMAL OWNER INFORMATION (or person with custody of animal):

Owner: _____ Phone: _____ (Other) _____

Address of Owner: _____
911# Street Name

Current Location of Animal: Same as Owner: Other : _____
911# Street Name

Animal Species: Dog Cat Bat Other : _____

Breed and Full Description: _____

Domestic Animals must be kept alive and available for Health Unit surveillance for 10 days to rule out risk of rabies.
 Do **NOT** euthanize animal involved unless authorized by Health Unit Public Health Inspector.
 The Health Unit does not remove healthy domestic animal from their owners.