

Operational Guidelines for Animal Bite Incidents in Nunavut

All suspected animal incidents MUST be reported to the Regional EHO (during business hours) or the EHO on call see Report form for numbers to call/fax

Type of Exposure to Client	Animal	Evaluation and Behaviour of Animal	Recommendations for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)
Patient found to have had Rabies Pre-exposure vaccine or had PEP.	Dogs, Cats, Foxes Wild animals		Draw serology for Titre Begin PEP (give day 0 and 3 ONLY) Without providing Rabies Immune Globulin (RIG) See current Canadian Immunization Guide and Baffin Laboratory Specimen collection guide
Indirect Contact or Contact but no lesions; (bite but no loss of skin integrity)	Dogs, Cats, Foxes Wild animals	Healthy, rabid, suspect rabid or unavailable for quarantine	No PEP required
Bite/scratch to head and neck	Dogs, Cats, Foxes Wild animals	Regardless of animal situation	Begin PEP. If animal available for quarantine and found to be healthy at day 10 or animal tissue tested and found to be negative PEP can be discontinued immediately
Bites/Scratches Not on head and neck (any loss of skin integrity)	Dogs, Cats, Foxes Wild animals	Healthy and Available for Quarantine	PEP not to be started unless animal develops symptoms of rabies during the 10 day quarantine period
		Unavailable for quarantine/Escaped Unreliable information (no witness of child bitten, intoxicated person, etc.)	Begin PEP if the animal cannot be found or definitively identified
Exposure to: Mucous membranes Fresh open cuts Scratches or skin abrasions exposed to saliva or other infectious material (skinning/preparing carcasses, etc)	Dogs, Cats, Foxes Wild animals	Suspect rabid by behavior of animal or test	Begin PEP

In the event of uncertainty regarding an incident the EHO must contact the CMOH by telephone

Post Exposure Prophylaxis =PEP

- PEP is the administration of RIG and Vaccine recommended in the current Canadian Immunization Guide and in product monographs.

Nunavut Animal Factors

- Small Animals i.e: lemmings, ground squirrels will not survive an attack by another animal that is positive for Rabies and therefore bites from such small animals are generally not considered a Rabies exposure.
- Any wild animal involved in an incident with a human should be killed humanely without injury to the head and the head must be submitted for testing.
- Dog previously immunized: due to the nature of the vaccination program in Nunavut **all** dog bites will be treated as if the dog **has not** been immunized.

Dr. Isaac Sobol, Chief Medical Officer of Health for Nunavut

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