

## Human Rabies Postexposure Prophylaxis (PEP) in Texas - Guide

The following guidelines can be used in determining whether PEP is appropriate in response to a potential exposure to rabies. An exposure is defined as 1) an animal bite which breaks the skin or 2) exposure of broken skin (bled or had serous drainage within the past 24 hours) or mucous membranes to saliva or cerebrospinal fluid. Stool, blood, urine, and skunk spray do not contain rabies virus.

Risk Category of Biting Animal	Laboratory Testing Result	Quarantine/ Observation	Human Postexposure Prophylaxis
<b>Low</b> (mice, rats, squirrels, nutria, rabbits, opossums, armadillos, shrews, prairie dogs, beavers, gophers, and other rodents)	Testing is not required unless the Local Rabies Control Authority or physician has cause to believe the animal is rabid.	Not applicable	Testing or PEP is not required unless the Local Rabies Control Authority or physician has cause to believe the biting animal is rabid.
<b>High</b> (Bats <sup>1</sup> , coyotes, foxes, raccoons, skunks) <b>or type of biting animal is unknown</b>	Positive or non-negative <sup>2</sup>	Animal tested	Administer PEP (usually acceptable to wait up to 72 hours for test results or efforts to locate the animal before beginning PEP unless animal displayed signs compatible with rabies).
	Negative	Animal tested	PEP not administered.
	Animal not available	Not possible	Administer PEP.
<b>Dog, Cat, Ferret<sup>3</sup></b>	Positive	Animal tested	Administer PEP (usually acceptable to wait up to 72 hours for test results or efforts to locate the animal before beginning PEP unless animal displayed signs compatible with rabies).
	Negative	Animal tested	PEP not administered.
	Not tested pending outcome of quarantine (animal placed in quarantine until end of a 10-day observation period)	PEP not administered if animal is available for quarantine/10-day observation.	If animal shows signs compatible with rabies during 10-day observation, animal should be immediately euthanized and tested. PEP should begin immediately without waiting for test results; discontinue if test is negative.
	Animal not available or non-negative <sup>2</sup>	Animal not available or tested	Consult public health professional.
<b>All Other Warm-Blooded Animals</b>	Positive	Animal tested	Administer PEP.
	Negative	Animal tested	PEP not administered.
	Non-negative <sup>2</sup>	Animal tested	Consult public health professional.
	Not tested	30-day observation <sup>4</sup>	Consult public health professional.
	Animal not available	Animal not available	Consult public health professional.

1. In incidents involving bats, PEP may be appropriate even in the absence of demonstrable bite, scratch, or mucous membrane exposure in situations in which there is reasonable probability that such exposure may have occurred (e.g., sleeping individual awakes to find a bat in the room, adult witnesses a bat in the room with a previously unattended child, mentally challenged person, intoxicated individual, etc.).

2. "Non-negative" includes all specimens not suitable for testing (destroyed, decomposed, etc.).

3. The decision whether a dog, cat, or ferret should be euthanized and tested or quarantined rests with the Local Rabies Control Authority.

4. The Local Rabies Control Authority may authorize a 30-day observation period in lieu of testing.

### RABIES PREVENTION IN TEXAS – 2004