



October 31, 2007

ATTN: Medical Health Officers and Branch Offices
Public Health Nursing Administrators and Assistant Administrators
Holders of Communicable Disease Control Manuals

Re: Revisions to Guidelines for the Control of Rabies

Please note the following revisions to the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 1: Management of Specific Diseases – Rabies:

Page 3, Section 4.0 “Guidelines for rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (RPEP):”

- Recommendation that post-exposure prophylaxis should be started as soon as possible after exposure and should be offered to exposed individuals regardless of the elapsed interval.

Page 5, Subsection 4.1 “Was the person exposed to a bat, or bitten or licked by another possibly rabid animal?”

- New information: being sprayed by a skunk is not considered an exposure.

Page 6, Subsection 4.1.1 “Bat Behaviour:”

- Information regarding bat behaviour is provided to assist in the assessment of reports from the public and the likelihood that the exposure was to a bat.

Page 7, Subsection 4.3 “Did the exposure occur in BC?”

- New recommendation regarding the concern re: counterfeit rabies vaccine being given when RPEP was started in another country

Page 7, Subsection 4.4 “Is the bat available for testing?”

- Information provided about safely capturing a bat for testing when there is the possibility of an exposure

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Page 8, Subsection 4.5 “Are the test results positive or equivocal?”

- Animal testing for rabies must be authorized by the CFIA: direction is to first consult with the CFIA District Veterinary Officer or the Regional Veterinary Office regarding the availability and necessity of testing and shipping logistics.

Page 10, Subsection 4.9 “Exposures in persons previously immunized against rabies:”

- Simplified the algorithm
- Replaced the term “stat” with “expedited.”
- Added recommendation to administer 3rd and 4th doses of rabies vaccine on days 7 and 14 if rabies antibody titre results are not available by day 7 or 14.

Page 11, Section 5.0 “Epidemiological/historical information:”

- Added historical note that bat variant rabies virus isolated from a cat in Maple Ridge in June 2007.

Page 13, Section 8.0 “Reporting:”

- Rabies in domestic animals is a reportable disease under the Reportable Disease Regulations of the federal Health of Animals Act, and is reportable to the CFIA.

Please note the following revisions to the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 2: Immunization Program:

Pages 52 and 56: Rabies post-exposure vaccines:

- Revisions made for consistency with Rabies Control Guidelines, Subsection 4.9 (as noted above).

Please remove and destroy the following pages from the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 1:

Rabies
Pages 1 - 19

Dated June 2006 and
December 2006

Insert the following replacement pages in the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 1:

Rabies
Pages 1 to 21

Dated October 2007





BC Centre for Disease Control
AN AGENCY OF THE PROVINCIAL HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY

Please remove and destroy the following pages from the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 2: Immunization Program:
Pages 52 and 56

Dated August 2007

Insert the following pages in the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 2: Immunization Program:
Pages 52 and 56

Dated October 2007

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Karen Pielak, Nurse Epidemiologist, at telephone (604)660-6061, fax (604)660-0197 or by email at karen.pielak@bccdc.ca

Sincerely,

David Patrick
Director
Epidemiology Services
BC Centre for Disease Control

pc: Dr Perry Kendall
Provincial Health Officer
Ministry of Health Services

Dr. Eric Young
Deputy Provincial Health Officer
Ministry of Health Services

Dr. Bob Fisk
Medical Consultant
Non-Communicable Disease
Ministry of Health Planning

Warren O'Briain
Executive Director
Comm Disease and Addiction Prevention
Ministry of Health Services

Craig Thompson
Manager, Communicable Disease Prevention --Immunization
Communicable Disease and Addiction Prevention
Ministry of Health Services

