

July 19 2019

## Interim Guidelines for the Use RIG in BC

Developed by BCCDC and BC MHOs and PHO

### Rationale

- Given the recent human rabies case and resulting increase in requests for RPEP, RIG is of limited supply
- RIG is a blood product with inherent risks
- RIG is of limited effectiveness when injected away from the site of exposure<sup>1</sup>
- WHO guidelines recently changed and they no longer recommend injecting the remainder of the RIG dose IM at a distance from the wound<sup>2</sup>

### Use of RIG

- Once RPEP has been recommended, **use RIG** in the following circumstances:
  - o **To infiltrate the wound**
  - o **To infiltrate the exposed area** when there is direct unprotected contact with a bat and a bite or scratch cannot be ruled out
- Once RPEP has been recommended, **do not use RIG** in the following circumstances:
  - o Once a wound or exposed area has been infiltrated, **do not inject remaining RIG into a muscle**
  - o When the exposure occurred **more than 12 months ago**
- If it is **uncertain whether direct contact occurred or whether the animal was a bat**, MHO discretion is used to determine whether to recommend RPEP and if so, whether to administer RIG
- Other considerations should be taken into account, as per the BC rabies guidelines<sup>3</sup>
- MHO discretion should be used when situations are unclear

### Use of rabies vaccine

- Recommendations for the use of rabies vaccine have not changed and should follow BC guidelines<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Intramuscular injection of RIG does not provide adequate serological protective antibody levels to neutralize the virus (Dean 1963, Chomchay 2000).

<sup>2</sup> WHO. Rabies vaccine: WHO position paper-April 2018. WHO Bulletin. 2018;16(93):201-220. Accessible at: <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/272371/WER9316.pdf?ua=1>. RIG recommendation based on: Bharti 2016, Bharti 2017, Madhusudana 2013, Saesow 2000.

<sup>3</sup> BCCDC. Rabies guidelines. 2018. Accessible at: <http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Epid/CD%20Manual/Chapter%201%20-%20CDC/BCRabiesGuidelines.pdf>