

**GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT OF ANIMAL BITES AND POTENTIAL RABIES EXPOSURES IN WISCONSIN**

ANIMAL SPECIES	CONDITION OF ANIMAL AT TIME OF BITE	TREATMENT OF EXPOSED PERSON <sup>1</sup> AND DISPOSITION OF ANIMAL
<b>Dog, cat, ferret</b> <sup>2</sup>	Healthy and available for 10 days of observation	No PEP unless animal develops signs of rabies <sup>3</sup> Quarantine and observe animal for 10 days <sup>4</sup>
	Rabid or suspected rabid	PEP indicated Sacrifice and test animal as soon as possible <sup>5</sup>
	Unknown (escaped)	PEP typically indicated Consult public health officials; consider search
<b>Skunk, bat, fox, coyote, raccoon, opossum, bobcat, wolf, or other carnivores whether wild or kept as pets</b> <sup>6</sup>	Regard as rabid unless proven otherwise by lab tests.	PEP indicated unless tests show animal was not rabid. Consult public health officials about advisability of beginning treatment prior to test results.  Animal should be killed and tested as soon as possible. <sup>5</sup> Do <b>not</b> hold for observation.
<b>Livestock</b>	Consult public health officials, & consider on case by case basis. Kill & test if signs of rabies apparent.	
<b>Rodents, rabbits and hares whether wild or kept as pets</b>	Bites of squirrels, hamsters, guinea pigs, gerbils, chipmunks, rats, mice, rabbits and hares virtually never call for PEP or testing of animal <b>unless</b> the animal was behaving abnormally at the time of the bite. However, bites from large rodents such as woodchucks, beavers, and muskrats should be handled like those from carnivores (above).	

<sup>1</sup> All bites and wounds should be thoroughly cleansed with soap and water **immediately**. Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), when indicated, is administered by a physician, and should be given as soon as possible, regardless of the interval from exposure.

<sup>2</sup> Authority does not yet exist in statute to quarantine ferrets, however, the alternative (for which there is authority in statute) is euthanasia and testing.

<sup>3</sup> If an animal under observation develops any signs suggestive of rabies, it should be immediately sacrificed and tested, and PEP initiated for the patient.

<sup>4</sup> Contact local public health agency or law enforcement regarding imposition/enforcement of quarantine. State statute requires imposition of quarantine **regardless** of animal's immunization status.

<sup>5</sup> Animals should not be shot in the head, nor should the head be mutilated in any way. Refrigerate specimen; avoid freezing; ship on wet ice; see the State Laboratory of Hygiene brochure "Diagnosis of Rabies" for details about shipping.

<sup>6</sup> Wild or domestic skunks, game animals, or fur-bearing animals (including raccoons) may not be sold or kept as pets unless specific permits are obtained.