



MEDICAL ADVISORY

Rabies Control duty to report

To: Physicians within the City of Hamilton
Registered Nurses in the Extended Class (i.e. Nurse Practitioners) within the City of Hamilton
Veterinarians within City of Hamilton
Hamilton Police Service
Hamilton Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (HSPCA)
City of Hamilton Animal Control
Boards of Education

From: Connie DeBenedet, Supervisor, Health Hazard Vector Borne Diseases Program

Date: July 30, 2019

RE: Rabies Control Program Duty to Report – Animal Bite or Animal Contact
Rabies Immunoglobulin Formula Changes
Rabies Vaccine and Rabies Immunoglobulin Shortages

This letter is a reminder to report all animal bites or other animal contact incidents involving saliva or other central nervous tissues to Hamilton's Rabies Control Program. The process for reporting is outlined below, following a summary of the duty to report such incidents. Also included below is information about rabies post exposure prophylaxis ordering and delivery details for physicians and nurse practitioners, and a summary of the Rabies Outbreak in Hamilton and surrounding areas.

Duty to report

[Ontario Regulation 557, Section 2 \(1\)](#), under the [Health Protection and Promotion Act](#), states that,

“A physician, registered nurse in the extended class, veterinarian, police officer, or any other person who has information concerning any animal bite or other animal contact that may result in rabies in persons shall as soon as possible notify the medical officer of health and provide the medical officer of health with the information.”

Further, Section 2 (2), states that,

“The owner or the person having the care and custody of an animal,
(a) that has bitten or is suspected of having bitten a person; or
(b) that is suspected by the medical officer of health of having rabies,
shall provide the medical officer of health with such information and assistance with respect to the animal as the medical officer of health requires. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 557, s. 2 (2).”

The Hamilton Burlington SPCA and Animal Control Services are included in this reminder letter as both agencies have the care and custody of animals as well as being in the group of, “any other person who has information concerning any animal bite or other animal contact”.

How to make a report

Bites or other animal contact incidents should be reported by phoning the City of Hamilton's Rabies Control program at the numbers listed below. We can be reached and respond on a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week basis.

You can also *follow up* any report using our mandatory reporting form (attached) by fax.

Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) management and safe holding

The post-exposure prophylaxis vaccines will be delivered to the health care facility that has an approved and monitored refrigeration unit as per the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care; once the PEP vaccines have been delivered they must:

- 1) **MUST REMAIN** in cold chain at the health care facility they were originally delivered to by Public Health and
- 2) The vaccine(s) are not to be removed from that monitored fridge nor transported off-site.

Telephone On-Call System

Business Hours (8:30am to 4:30pm)

To report an incident during business hours, please call 905-546-2424 ex. 3327 to reach our rabies program secretary's line. This line is also monitored by other secretarial staff during lunch and breaks however if the line is not answered directly, please leave a detailed voicemail message and every effort will be made to return your call as soon as possible on the same day.

After Hours and Weekends

To report an incident outside of business hours, please call the City of Hamilton Public Health Services' answering line at 905-546-3570. Report your details and if you have questions or concerns about the report that are urgent, please ask to speak to the Environmental Health Public Health Inspector on-call.

Additional Contact

After reporting by telephone, you may also submit report details by fax. Please fax to 905-546-2787. We have attached a fax form for your use.

Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) Orders – This pertains to Physicians and Nurse Practitioners Only

The [Rabies Prevention and Control Protocol](#) recommends that individuals receive [post-exposure prophylaxis](#) within 24 hours after the decision is made that [PEP](#) is required. If you are placing an order for [PEP – rabies vaccine](#) and rabies immune globulin (RabIg) – please note that delivery may take up to 24 hours from the time the order is placed. Delivery timing is dependent on a few factors including time of day the order is placed and a risk assessment of the incident.

Rabies Immunoglobulin

As of July 2019, RabIg will be available in one of two formulations:

- 2 mL vials containing 150 IU/ml; or
- 1 mL vials containing 300 IU/ml.

Ensure that the appropriate formula specific to the RabIg formulation is used to calculate the dose required for the individual to receive RabIg

2ml Vial

$$\frac{20 \text{ IU/kg} \times (\text{client weight in kg})}{150 \text{ IU/mL}} = \text{dose in mL}$$

1 mL Vial

$$\frac{20 \text{ IU/kg} \times (\text{client weight in kg})}{300 \text{ IU/mL}} = \text{dose in mL}$$

Rabies Vaccine and Immunoglobulin Shortages

Please be advised that the Ministry of Health has notified public health units that due to high demand, the provincial supply of rabies vaccine and rabies immunoglobulin is lower than usual and may not be fully replenished before November 2019. As such, Hamilton Public Health is asking all health care providers to keep this in mind and work with their patients and Public Health Inspectors in rabies case management to follow the applicable public health risk assessment and the resulting recommendations. For more information, please see the enclosed memorandum from the Ontario Ministry of Health.

Rabies Outbreak

Since December 2015, over 323 cases of rabid animals, including raccoons, skunks, one fox and two cats, have tested positive for rabies in Hamilton, and over 150 others in the surrounding jurisdictions. Before this outbreak, the last reported rabid land animal in Hamilton was in 1994 and Ontario had been free of the raccoon strain of the virus rabies for the past ten years. The existence of rabid wildlife locally and in surrounding areas increases the likelihood that our domestic pets and wildlife could come in contact with a rabid animal.

Links

Resources are embedded links in the body of the letter as well as the full URL addresses for these documents below. If you have not received this letter electronically and would like to, please call our program secretary at 905-546-2424 ex. 3327.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns about your duty to report or with our process. I can be reached by telephone or email at:

- Telephone: 905-546-2424 ex. 3576
- Connie.DeBenedet@hamilton.ca

Sincerely,

Connie DeBenedet C.I.P.H.I. (C), B.A.Sc., COHS
Supervisor, Health Hazard Vector Borne Diseases Program
Healthy Environments Division
Healthy and Safe Communities Department - Public Health Services

URL addresses:

How to Administer Rabies Post Exposure Prophylaxis Video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yCuTF3hVt-o&feature=youtu.be>

Rabies Prevention and Control Protocol, 2018:
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/oph_standards/docs/protocols_guidelines/Rabies_Prevention_and_Control_Protocol_2018_en.pdf

Regulation 557:
http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_900557_e.htm

Health Protection and Promotion Act:
http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90h07_e.htm

Canadian Immunization Guidelines – 2015 – Rabies

Rabies Control duty to report

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/canadian-immunization-guide-part-4-active-vaccines/page-18-rabies-vaccine.html>

Additional information:

Canadian Immunization Guidelines – Guidelines Errata and Clarifications

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/cig-gci/index-eng.php>

Enclosure: Rabies Reporting Fax Form
Rabies Vaccine and Immunoglobulin Fact Sheet
Ministry of Health Memorandum