



ALLEGHENY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT RABIES EXPOSURE PROTOCOL SUMMARY

INFECTIOUS DISEASE PROGRAM 412-578-8062

DETERMINATION FOR POST-EXPOSURE TREATMENT WITH RABIES BIOLOGICS IS
MADE BASED ON THE FOLLOWING:

- A.** Report of an animal exposure, including a bite, scratch, mucous membrane, or other saliva exposure (e.g. handling the animal with cuts on hands without wearing gloves).
- B.** High-risk animals (e.g., raccoons, bats, foxes, skunks, coyotes, and groundhogs)
 - 1. If the high-risk animal is available, it should be tested immediately for rabies. Rabies post-exposure vaccines may be delayed until the test result is available, usually within 24 to 48 hours. If the animal is not available for testing, post-exposure prophylaxis is indicated.
 - 2. Rabies post-exposure prophylaxis may be appropriate even in the absence of an observable bite, scratch or mucous membrane exposure, in situations in which there is reasonable probability that such exposure may have occurred.
 - 3. If a patient reports waking in a room with a bat, and the bat is unavailable for testing.
- C.** Domestic animals (e.g., dogs, cats or ferrets)
 - 1. If the domestic animal is healthy and available, it should be observed for 10 days from the date of the bite. If the animal remains healthy for the observation period, prophylaxis with rabies vaccine is not indicated.
 - 2. If the domestic animal is sickly, or unusually aggressive, it should be euthanized and tested for rabies. Decision to give rabies vaccine may be delayed until the test result is available, usually within 24 to 48 hours.
 - 3. If a stray animal cannot be located and captured within 48 hours from the time of the exposure, (12 hours in the case of a head or neck exposure), rabies prophylaxis should begin immediately.

D. Low-risk animals (e.g., hamsters, chipmunks, squirrels, rats, mice and rabbits)

1. These animals are not known to cause human rabies infections in the United States. Bites or scratches from these animals almost never require rabies post-exposure vaccines.

- ❖ Upon validating an exposure, the Allegheny County Health Department refers victim(s) to a local emergency department for the treatment of the wound, tetanus booster (if applicable), and post-exposure rabies prophylaxis.

THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) APPROVED RABIES POST-EXPOSURE PROTOCOL IS:

1. Human Rabies Immune Globulin (HRIG)

Given to ALL persons without a history of being treated with rabies vaccines.
Can be administered up to 7 days after initiating post-exposure prophylaxis.
The dose is determined based on a patient's body weight (20u/Kg).

2. Human Rabies Vaccine (HRV)

Four individual intramuscular (IM) injections administered on days 0 – 3 – 7 and 14.

Or

If previously vaccinated against rabies 2 individual IM injections given on days 0 and 3.

- ❖ Allegheny County Health Department is available for questions 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

- Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, please call (412) 578-8062.
- Evenings, weekends, and holidays please call (412) 687-2243.

- ❖ For removal of live animals, including bats:

- Within City of Pittsburgh limits – City of Pittsburgh Animal Control
 - Mon – Fri, 7am - 11pm, and Sat & Sun, 9am - 5pm: 412-255-2036
 - Mon – Fri, 11pm - 7am, and Sat & Sun, 5pm - 9am: 412-255-2935
- Outside of City of Pittsburgh limits – Pennsylvania Game Commission Southwest Region
 - Available 24 hours/day: 833-742-4868 or 833-742-9453

Specimen Drop-Off:

Specimens can be submitted at one of two locations:

1) Lawrenceville (until 12/31/2025)

3901 Penn Avenue,
Building 1
Pittsburgh, PA 15224

Monday – Friday: 7:00am – 8:00pm
Saturday – Sunday: 2:00pm – 8:00pm

Building 1 is located at the corner of Penn Avenue and 40th Street. Parking is available by entering from 40th Street. The entrance is at the rear of the building. When you arrive call 412-350-4218 and the building guard will assist you.

2) Warrendale

119 Commonwealth Drive
Warrendale, PA 15086

Monday – Friday: 8:00am – 3:30pm

Drop off is located at the rear of the building at the loading docks. Go to the door next to the loading dock and press the buzzer for building access.

**We are unable to accept any live animals
for testing, this includes bats.**