

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT DISEASE INVESTIGATION STEPS

NC REPORTABLE DISEASE/CONDITION	NC DISEASE CODE	INFECTIOUS AGENT (S)
RABIES, Human	33	Rabies Virus
PREPARING FOR INVESTIGATION		
KNOW THE DISEASE/CONDITION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read about Rabies in the CD Manual. • See the case definition for Rabies in the CD Manual. • Study the APHA <i>Control of Communicable Diseases Manual</i>, 19th ed., pp 498 - 508. • Refer to the NC Veterinary Public Health website at www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/vet.html. Click on the "Rabies Resources for the Medical Professional" section located at the top of the page. • Print and review reporting forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part 1: <i>Confidential Disease Report (DHHS 2124)</i> Part 2: <i>Rabies (DHHS/EPI # 33)</i> 	
CONDUCTING INVESTIGATION		
COLLECT CLINICAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain healthcare provider clinical notes from date(s) of service for this disease/condition. • If patient hospitalized for this disease, obtain medical record (admission note, progress note, lab report(s), and discharge summary). • Look for evidence in the medical record that supports clinical findings described in the case definition. 	
REVIEW LABORATORY INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review laboratory report(s) specific to this disease. • Evaluate laboratory results to determine if requirements of the case definition are satisfied. • Contact the healthcare provider if further testing of the patient is necessary. 	
APPLY THE CASE DEFINITION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the case definition to determine if the clinical and laboratory findings meet the case definition criteria. 	
IMPLEMENTING CONTROL MEASURES		
ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY SOURCE OF EXPOSURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review clinical documentation for potential source(s) of exposure. • If potential source of exposure is not evident in clinical information, interview patient or other knowledgeable person in an effort to obtain a detailed assessment of potential sources. Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ travel outside continental US ○ occupational exposure (i.e. pet shop owner/worker, farmer, veterinarian/staff, wildlife worker, lab worker, zookeeper, animal importer, etc.) ○ bat in house or elsewhere 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ other animal exposure (wild or domestic, including pets and livestock) • Involve local animal control, wildlife, agriculture agency, PHRST veterinarian and public health veterinarian in helping identify source and/or contacts. • If other unvaccinated animal exposed to suspected source animal is identified, obtain appropriate specimen for rabies testing at SLPH. • If source of exposure is suspected to be livestock the North Carolina Department of Agriculture must be notified. The state public health veterinarian can assist with contacting this agency (919) 733-3419.
IMPLEMENT CONTROL MEASURES TO PREVENT DISEASE AND ADDITIONAL EXPOSURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify health director and PIO if a significant number of contacts are suspected. • Consider risk communication messages to public and health professionals. • Activate Epi Team if indicated. • Use the CDC website www.cdc.gov/rabies/ to teach at risk people about the disease. • Provide information to exposed persons regarding local providers who offer rabies PEP. • Stress the necessity for prompt treatment, adherence to vaccination schedule, and completion of series. Document the information provided.
REPORTING INVESTIGATION	
REPORT TO NC COMMUNICABLE DISEASE BRANCH (CD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter Part 1 and Part 2 Communicable Disease Reports into NC EDSS as a new event, or update the existing event if already entered. • Assign event to State Disease Registrar when case investigation complete. • Do an "Event_Print" in NC EDSS after assigning to the state. Keep for one year along with any additional notes. Maintain as a surveillance file, not a medical record.
CASE FINDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the course of the investigation, identify all potential contacts that may need Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) and refer to appropriate healthcare provider. • Refer symptomatic individuals to medical center immediately while maintaining control measures.
SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS	
STATE LABORATORY OF PUBLIC HEALTH (SLPH) TESTING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify the SLPH of impending specimens.
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE MEASURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal control staff, wildlife workers, veterinarians, staff and other persons working with potentially rabid animals should have pre-exposure rabies vaccine. • Persons having been previously vaccinated with pre-exposure rabies vaccine who continue regular animal exposure should have a titer and/or booster dose every 2 years.

RISK COMMUNICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any case of this disease will pique interest among media, health professionals, government officials and the public.• Consider using risk communication tools for public and health professionals.• Work with Animal Control and Public Health (CD Branch staff and public health veterinarian) to develop media messages.• Cases with multiple contacts may need NC HAN alerts, EPI-X reports, MD alerts, and press releases.• NC DHHS Public Information Office (919) 733-9190 is available to assist local health departments as needed.• Notify blood or tissue banks if indicated.
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