



**March 3, 2009**

**ATTN:** Medical Health Officers and Branch Offices  
Directors of Health Protection  
Public Health Nursing Administrators and Assistant Administrators  
Holders of Communicable Disease Control Manuals

**Re: Revisions to Communicable Disease Control Manual:  
Chapter I – Management of Specific Diseases, Rabies**

**Please note the following revisions to the above guidelines:**

**Page 1, Section 2.0 “Clinical Description”**

- Changed order of Clinical Description; added Infectious Agent and Reservoirs of Infection to follow a more logical flow.
- Added language on airborne transmission since there is some uncertainty around its role.
- Added Reservoirs.

**Page 2, Section 3.0 “Definitions”**

- Added definitions for contact and unusual behaviour; added language to the information on rabies vaccine.

**Page 4, Section 4.0 “Guidelines for Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (RPEP)”, Algorithm**

- Added direction at bottom to contact CFIA for testing.

**Page 5, Subsection 4.1 “Was the person exposed to a bat, or bitten or licked by another possibly rabid animal?”**

- Updated statistics on positive bats.
- Introduced new policy doing away with RPEP for bat-in-bedroom and bat nearby exposures; only evidence, observation or report of physical contact will be considered for RPEP. The rationale is that evidence does not support RPEP for non-contact exposure, and that the likelihood of an unknown bite from a bat is very low.
- Language added indicating bats in these exposures will not be tested, since RPEP is not a consideration, unless there is physical contact.
- Added MSDS information on rabies virus.
- Paragraph on rodents (new page 7) moved down.

**Administrative Circular 2009:06**



- Language on aerosol transmission has been amended and response clarified further.
- Added language to more clearly define response to someone exposed to an animal that has been exposed to a bat or suspected rabid animal (new page 7).

**Page 8, Subsection 4.2 “Have first aid and wound care been performed?”**

- First aid language has been added – clarifying flushing of wound and suggesting disinfectants as an option.

**Page 8, Subsection 4.3 “Did the exposure occur in BC?”**

- Last paragraph removed

**Page 9, Subsection 4.3.1 “RPEP started in other countries”**

- New section 4.3.1 “RPEP started in other countries” added, with more detailed language on RPEP given or started in other countries added.

**Page 10, Subsection 4.5 “Testing suspect animals”**

- Added wording to indicate testing at the discretion of the CFIA DV.
- Section removed, added language to state that testing of animals must not be done unless RPEP will be undertaken in the event of a positive.
- Added language to describe specimens and condition of the specimens.
- Wording of last paragraph changed slightly from EHOs “must be requested to prepare and ship specimens” to EHOs “must prepare and ship specimens”.

**Page 11, Subsection 4.7 “Can the dog, cat, or ferret be observed for 10 days to check for signs of rabies?”**

- Language on animal exposures expanded to cover exposures in BC, the developed world and enzootic areas. Minimal risk assessment can be considered for domestic animals in BC.

**Page 13, Subsection 4.8 “Did the animal exhibit signs compatible with rabies?”**

- Link to the online Merck Veterinary Manual added to assess neurological behaviour.

**Page 15, Section 5.0 “Epidemiological/Historical Information”**

- Language added to clarify previous non-bat positives in BC.

**Page 15, Section 6.0 “Release of Biologicals for Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis”**

- New link for BC Health File.



**Page 16, Section 7.0 “Recording”**

- Direction given to add immunizations to iPHIS PHS module, Imms/TST tab and not the Rabies module, Imms tab.
- Other language added to clarify recording.

**Page 17, Section 8.0 “Reporting”**

- Removed the word “domestic”, to correct the statement rabies in *all* animals is reportable.

**Page 17, Section 9.0 “Detention, Observation, and Testing of Animals suspected of being rabid or having physical contact with a bat.”**

- Section rewritten.

**Page 18, Section 10.0 “Simian B Virus”**

- Website added for identification of macaque monkeys.

**Page 20, Section 13.0 “References”**

- References updated.

**Page 22, Appendix A: Canadian Food Inspection Agency – Animal Health Programs**

- CFIA contacts updated.

**Page 23, Appendix B: Rabies Exposure Report and Rabies Biologicals Request Form**

- Rabies Exposure Report and Rabies Biologicals Request Form updated to reflect changes in iPHIS Data Standards; mandatory fields underlined.

**Please remove and destroy the following from the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 1 – Management of Specific Diseases, Rabies**

Table of Contents

Pages 1 to 21

October 2007

**Please insert the following in the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 1- Management of Specific Diseases, Rabies**

Table of Contents

Pages 1 to 28

February 2009



**BC Centre for Disease Control**  
AN AGENCY OF THE PROVINCIAL HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Eleni Galanis, Physician Epidemiologist (604-660-5401; [eleni.galanis@bccdc.ca](mailto:eleni.galanis@bccdc.ca)) or Ken Cooper, Senior Environmental Health Specialist (250-768-3949; [ken.cooper@bccdc.ca](mailto:ken.cooper@bccdc.ca)).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Monika Naus'.

Dr. Monika Naus,  
Medical Director, Immunization Program  
Associate Director  
Epidemiology Services  
BC Centre for Disease Control

pc: Dr Perry Kendall  
Provincial Health Officer  
Ministry of Health Services

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