

Chicago Department of Public Health On-Call Manual

Evaluating Potential Human Exposures to Rabies: **Domestic Animals**

What is a rabies exposure?

Rabies is transmitted through exposure to virus in saliva or brain/nervous system tissue. Rabies exposures can be either:

- Bite: Any penetration of the skin, regardless of body side, by the teeth of a potentially rabid animal.
- Non-bite: The contamination of open wounds, abrasions, or mucous membranes (eyes, nose, mouth) with potentially infectious saliva or nervous tissue.

Exposures reportable to CDPH within 24 hours: to report, call 312-743-9000 or 311 if after hours*:

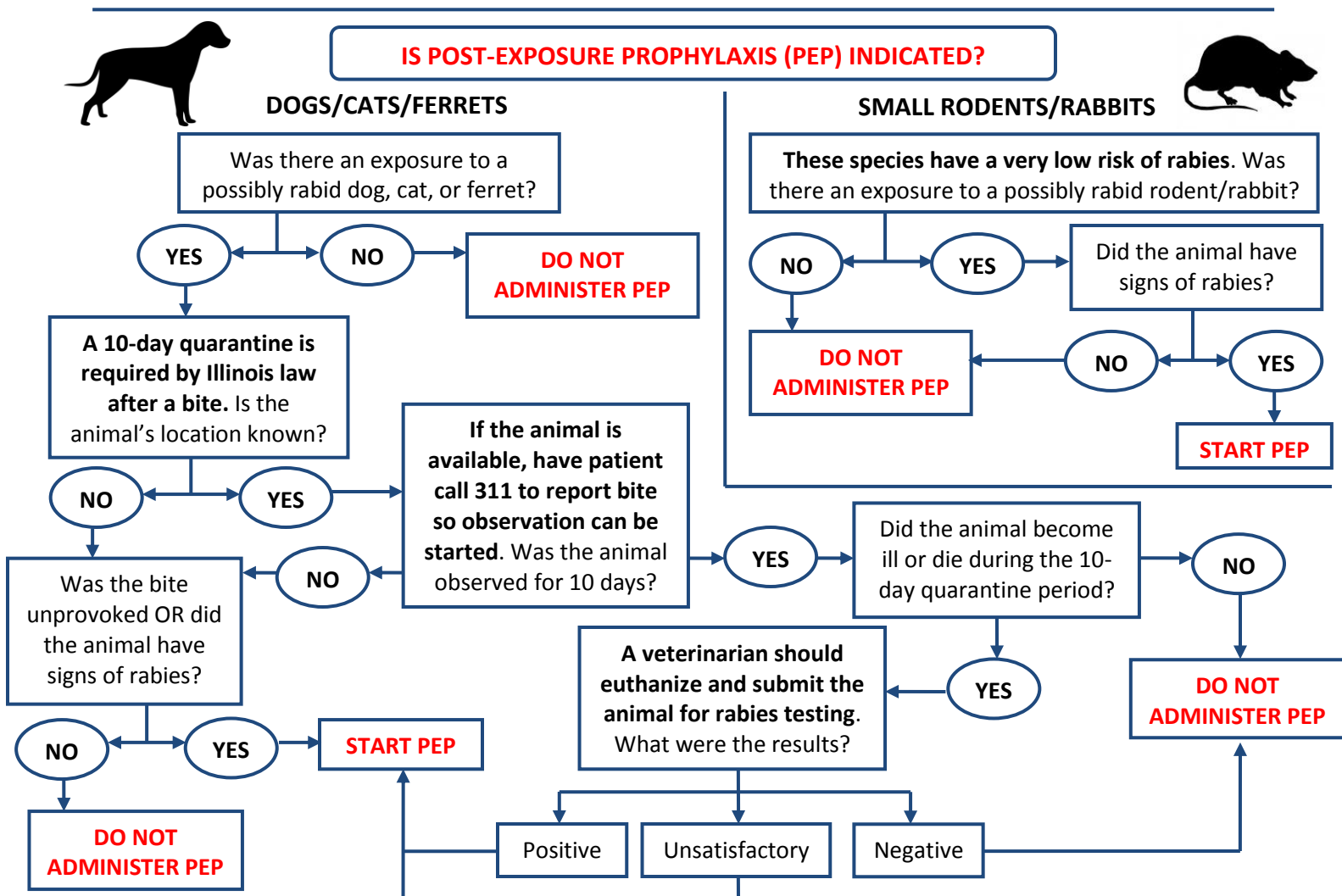
1. Any person started on rabies post-exposure prophylaxis
2. Any person bitten or exposed to saliva, brain, or nervous tissue from a suspect rabid animal. Healthy rabbits, small rodents, indoor-only pets or rabies-vaccinated dogs, cats, or ferrets are excluded UNLESS they display signs consistent with rabies or test positive for rabies.

Examples of provoked bites*:

- Attempts to feed or take away food or toys from an animal; entering an animal's territory, breaking up a fight between 2 animals; handling an injured animal; or running, riding a bike, or skateboarding near an animal

Important questions to ask:

1. How did the exposure occur? Was it provoked or unprovoked?
2. When and where (address) did the exposure occur?
3. What was the animal species? Was the animal owned or a stray? Was the animal acting unusually?
4. Is the animal's vaccine history known? Can the animal be positively identified?
5. Is the animal available for a 10-day quarantine? If so, the bite should be reported to the police by calling 311.



*To discuss or report rabies exposures, call 312-743-9000 during business hours or 311 after hours and ask for the Communicable Disease clinician on-call.