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**SUBJECT:** Human Rabies Case in Ontario  
**Date:** September 9, 2024  
**Pages:** 2  
**To:** Physicians, Hospitals  
**From:** Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health & CEO

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This week, Ontario detected its first case of clinical rabies in a human since 1967. Attached is a memo from the Chief Medical Officer regarding the case and rabies more broadly in Ontario.

The incubation period for rabies can vary significantly and contributing factors include:

- the location of the exposure site (distance from the central nervous system)
- the type of rabies virus strains
- any existing immunity

In humans, the symptoms of rabies usually appear two weeks to many months after the bite. There is no treatment for rabies once symptoms appear. The disease is almost always fatal. Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) is the treatment for the prevention of rabies.

The current human rabies case resulted from contact with an infected bat. Bats are native to Ontario and are an important part of our local environment. Historically, approximately 5% of Ontario bats carried the rabies virus. This year, that number has increased to 16.5%. Bat bites are extremely difficult to detect so it is important to consider all *potential* bat exposures and contact public health for advice.

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health is a local resource for health care providers for rabies exposures. Please contact the agency if you suspect a rabies exposure has occurred and require additional support to resolve the case.

Ontario Regulation 557/90 (O. Reg 557/90) sets out the duty to report animal bite and contact information:

“A physician, registered nurse in the extended class, veterinarian, police officer or any other person who has information concerning either or both of the following shall, as soon as possible, notify the medical officer of health and provide the medical officer of health with the information, including the name and contact information of the exposed person:

1. Any bite from a mammal.
2. Any contact with a mammal that is conducive to the potential transmission of rabies to persons.”

(O.Reg 557/90, s.2(1)).

Fax completed [Animal Exposure Reports](#) (attached) to our Reportable Diseases fax line at 1-855-WDG-LINE (1-855-934-5463).

**For more information, please contact:**

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# Animal Exposure Report

**Complete and Fax ASAP to: 1-855-934-5463**

Reporting Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner/Animal Information	Victim Information
Owner Name: _____ _____	Victim Name: _____
Address: _____ _____	Address: _____ _____
Phone Number: _____	Phone Number: _____
Type of Animal: <input type="checkbox"/> Cat <input type="checkbox"/> Dog <input type="checkbox"/> Bat	DOB: _____ Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	Weight: _____ kg/lb
Details of Incident: _____ _____ _____	Name of Guardian: _____
	Type of Exposure: <input type="checkbox"/> Bite <input type="checkbox"/> Scratch
	<input type="checkbox"/> Handling <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
	Location of Wound: _____

Check box if rabies post-exposure prophylaxis started at hospital <input type="checkbox"/>						
<b>RIG</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Imogam®	<input type="checkbox"/> HyperRAB®	<input type="checkbox"/> KamRAB™	Lot: _____	Exp: _____	Number of Vials: _____
<b>Vaccine</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> IMOVAX®	<input type="checkbox"/> RABAVert®		Lot: _____	Exp: _____	Number of Vials: _____

The information on this form is collected under the authority of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* in accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *Personal Health Information Protection Act*. This information will be used for the delivery of public health programs and services; the administration of the agency; and the maintenance of healthcare databases, registries and related research, in compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. Any questions about the collection of this information should be addressed to the Privacy Officer.