WV Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology (DIDE)
Rabies Risk Assessment for Human Exposure to Animals

Determine if exposure has occurred:
- Bite or Scratch?
- Saliva, CNS tissue in mucous membrane, wound?
- Questionable bat contact?  

Yes

Determine type of animal involved:
- (non-mammal=NO rabies risk)

By Law, All Animal Bites and other Potential Rabies Exposures Must Be Reported to the Local Health Department within 24 Hours

Bats, skunks, raccoons, foxes, other wild carnivores (including wolf hybrids)

- Is animal available for testing?
  - No
  - Yes

Start PEP

Rodents & Rabbits

- Except for unusual circumstances*, rodents and rabbits are NOT considered likely to transmit rabies and do NOT need to be tested

PEP generally not indicated

Test brain tissue; Contact local health department† to submit head to WV Office of Laboratory Services.

- Negative result
  - No further action

- Positive or indeterminate result
  - Start PEP

Pep should be considered when direct contact between a human and a bat has occurred, unless exposed person is an adult and can be certain that a bite, scratch, or mucous membrane exposure did not occur. Persons who awaken to find a bat in their bedroom, and persons with mental impairment or children who are found playing unsupervised with a bat can be considered for post-exposure prophylaxis.

*There is no quarantine period established for wild animals; therefore, post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) or testing brain of involved animal are the only appropriate measures if an exposure occurs.

†Public health consultation is recommended. Contact local health department (http://www.wvdhhr.org/wvlocalhealth/lhd_profiles/lhdreport/index.aspx) or DIDE at (304) 558-5358 or 1-800-423-1271

Cat / Dog / Ferret in U.S.

- Is animal available for testing or quarantine?
  - No
  - Yes

Assess circumstances to evaluate need for PEP:
1. Circumstances of exposure (provoked?)
2. Exposure type (bite?)
3. Behavior of animal (normal?)
4. Vaccination status of pet
5. Local rabies prevalence

PEP generally not indicated

Consultation†

If animal is dead or develops signs of rabies, test brain tissue

Consultation†

If animal is healthy after 10 days, PEP not indicated

Positive or indeterminate result

Negative result

If animal is healthy after 10–14 days, PEP not indicated

Negative result

If animal is dead or develops signs of rabies, test brain tissue

Positive or indeterminate result

PEP should be considered when direct contact between a human and a bat has occurred, unless exposed person is an adult and can be certain that a bite, scratch, or mucous membrane exposure did not occur. Persons who awaken to find a bat in their bedroom, and persons with mental impairment or children who are found playing unsupervised with a bat can be considered for post-exposure prophylaxis.

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture, Office of the State Veterinarian should be notified immediately of any livestock testing positive for rabies (304-558-2214).

PLEASE NOTE: THIS RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDE IS NOT INTENDED TO ADDRESS ALL POTENTIAL RABIES EXPOSURES NOR SHOULD ALL DECISIONS BE BASED SOLELY ON THE ABOVE INFORMATION.