What constitutes an exposure?

Any penetration of skin by the teeth of a potentially rabid animal or contamination of scratches, abrasions, open wounds or mucous membranes with saliva or other potentially infectious material (such as brain tissue) of a potentially rabid animal.

Evaluating the risk of exposure to the virus

* When did the exposure occur?
* What was the animal species?
* Can the patient positively identify the dog or cat?
* What were the circumstances of the exposure: provoked or unprovoked?
* Was there exposure to rabies virus as defined above?
* Was the animal captured? If a dog, cat, and/or ferret, what is the possibility that it will be captured?

PEP = post-exposure prophylaxis

### Bats

- Was there been direct physical contact with a bat or has a bat been found in a room with a sleeping person, an unconscious person or someone that is not able to affirm that no direct contact occurred?
  - Yes
    - Was the animal captured?
      - Yes
        - Sacrifice animal. May wish to initiate PEP pending test results
          - Positive
            - Start PEP
          - Negative
            - PEP not needed
        - No
          - STOP - PEP may not be necessary
      - No
        - STOP - PEP not necessary
    - No
      - Test results

### Dog, Cat, and/or Ferret

- Was there exposure to a possibly rabid dog/ cat/ ferret?
  - Yes
    - Was the animal captured?
      - Yes
        - If the animal is normal and healthy, quarantine the animal for 10 days unless circumstances dictate otherwise
          - Pos.
            - Did the animal exhibit signs of rabies?
              - No
                - No
                - Start PEP, contact health department
              - Yes
                - Sacrifice the animal. May want to start PEP pending laboratory results
          - Neg.
            - PEP not necessary
        - No
          - STOP - PEP not necessary
      - No
        - STOP - PEP not necessary
  - No
    - Was the bite provoked?
      - Yes
        - Did the animal exhibit signs of rabies?
          - Yes
            - Sacrifice the animal. May want to start PEP pending laboratory results
          - No
            - STOP - PEP not necessary
      - No
        - START PEP, contact health department

### Wild Animals

- Was there an exposure from a raccoon, skunk, fox or large rodent such as a groundhog?
  - Yes
    - PEP not needed
  - No
    - Start PEP

Please Note: as with all flow charts, unique situations may exist that are not covered by a simple diagram. Definitions may vary between people. If there are questions, please contact the local or state health department.