



Annual Reminder: Reporting Suspected Rabies Exposures

Health Unit

Hastings &
Prince Edward Counties

What is Rabies?

Rabies is a fatal viral disease that may be transmitted to any warm blooded animal.

Although the prevalence of rabies within Hastings and Prince Edward counties is not high, the disease is still present.

Did you know?

The following people have a legal duty to report animal bite and scratch information to the health unit:

- Physicians,
- Extended class nurses,
- Veterinarians,
- Police officers, and
- Anyone having animal bite information.

What is a Rabies Investigation?

All reported incidents are investigated. A rabies investigation conducted by the health unit determines if post-exposure anti-rabies treatment is necessary. The rabies investigation determines the history of the suspect animal and contributing exposure factors.

What will happen to suspect animals?

For dogs and cats a 10-day observation period is the preferred way to determine the potential for rabies transmission at the time of the bite or scratch. In most cases the animal remains with its owner to monitor for changes in health status. In cases with stray dogs or cats, animal control may try to capture the animal. At the end of 10-days, if the animal is in good health we know the suspect animal was not shedding the rabies virus at the time of exposure.

Do you have knowledge of an animal exposure?

The detailed information you provide helps protect your family and community from rabies. If you know of an animal exposure or want to learn more about rabies, please contact Environmental Health, Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit at 613-966-5513, Ext. 677. Fax incident reports to 613-968-1461.