

Instruction for Potential Rabies Contacts

(Never handle any wild animal with bare hands! Always use rubber gloves. Assume any wild mammal has rabies until proven otherwise.)

IMMEDIATE WASHING WITH SOAP AND WATER IS CONSIDERED THE MOST IMPORTANT, SIMPLE FACTOR IN PREVENTING RABIES.

- 1) **If a person or a pet comes in contact with a suspect rabid animal**, it is important to establish the owner, the location, and vaccination status of that animal.

- 2) **If a suspect animal is killed:**
 - a) The head should not be damaged as the brain is necessary for examination for rabies.
 - b) If the animal cannot be examined immediately, the animal must be **refrigerated, not frozen**. Refrigeration can be accomplished by placing the animal in a cardboard box with ice. The intent is to keep the animal from decomposing. **Always handle any suspect animal with rubber gloves.**

- 3) **If a person is bitten by or comes into contact with a rabid or suspect animal**, the hands or area in contact should be immediately washed thoroughly with soap and water. The person should consult with a physician or the local health department about the degree of contact and necessity of rabies vaccination.

- 4) **If a pet comes in contact with a suspect rabid animal:**
 - a) Do not handle or examine the pet with bare hands. Saliva from the suspect animal may be on the pet's fur. Always use rubber gloves for contact or examination.
 - b) The pet should be quarantined (doubled confined, that is, tied up and in a pen) away from any contact with people or other pets until the status of the suspect animal can be determined.
 - c) If that pet has a current (within the last 3 years) rabies vaccination, that pet should receive a booster vaccination immediately. Pets that have only had one rabies vaccination in their lifetimes are not considered to be vaccinated until they have had a second vaccination one year after the first vaccination. If the suspect animal is indeed positive for rabies, the pet must be kept under observation for a period of 45 days.
 - d) If that pet **does not** have a current rabies vaccination, and the suspect animal is indeed positive for rabies, then that pet must either be destroyed, or **quarantined (double confined) for a period of 6 months**, with the rabies vaccination given either when placed into quarantine, or 30 days before release from quarantine. Otherwise, it could develop rabies at any time during that period and expose you or others.

- 5) **If the biting animal is a pet**, it should be confined for a period of 10 days for observation. If the animal becomes ill, it should be examined immediately by a licensed veterinarian who is fully informed of the situation. If the animal dies within this time period, the head should be submitted for examination for rabies. In either case, the local health department should be notified immediately.

- 6) **If the biting animal is wild or a stray and not available for quarantine or examination,** that animal should be considered to be rabid and a physician and the local health department should be consulted.

For further information, contact:

Faithful Friends Animal Clinic	(304) 358-2360
Pendleton County 911	(304) 358-3271
Pendleton County Health Dept.	(304) 358-7565