



August 14, 2018

Attention Providers:

The purpose of this letter is to remind you about the importance of immediately reporting animal bites. Per Health and Safety Code Section 826.401, all medical and veterinary providers are responsible for reporting, regardless of whether or not post-exposure prophylaxis for rabies (PEP) is appropriate or whether medical treatment is rendered. Animal bites occurring within the cities of Santa Barbara and Carpinteria should be reported directly to those cities and all others must be reported via the [Santa Barbara County Animal Services Bite and Quarantine Report](#) and faxed to the appropriate fax numbers noted at the bottom of the form. The Animal Bite and Quarantine form is also available on our website at www.sbcphd.org. Our ability to respond to animal bite reports in a timely and efficient manner is completely dependent on the accuracy of information you provide. Therefore, please ensure that information is complete, accurate, and reported promptly.

In addition, all medical providers evaluating bites from a potentially rabid animal and animal control staff who receive these reports should contact the Disease Control Office at (805) 681-5280 day or night to report the incident. The Disease Control program will provide consultation and recommendations for testing, treatment, and rabies prophylaxis, if indicated.

I would also like to remind providers that in 2010 the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices changed their recommendation for rabies PEP from 5 doses to 4 doses. This change was based on new studies indicating that 4 vaccine doses in combination with rabies immune globulin (RIG) elicited an adequate immune response. The first dose of the 4-dose course should be administered as soon as possible after exposure (day 0). Additional doses should then be administered on days 3, 7, and 14 after the first vaccination. ACIP recommendations for the use of RIG remain unchanged.

Thank you for the important work that you do to promote the health of Santa Barbara County residents and animals. As always, Disease Control and Prevention staff is available to answer any questions or provide assistance by calling (805) 681-5280.

Sincerely,

Charity Dean MD, MPH
Health Officer, Santa Barbara County Public Health Department