STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

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Martin O'Malley, Governor – Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor – Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D., Secretary

Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)

What to Expect If You Need Rabies PEP

What is rabies PEP?

- Rabies PEP is highly effective in preventing rabies in humans after a suspected exposure to the rabies virus (e.g. contact with saliva from rabid animals by bite or scratch, or exposure to a bat in the house). It consists of:
  - Cleaning the wound with soap and water
  - Administration of immunizations

- For persons who have not been previously vaccinated against rabies, immunization includes:
  - A single dose of rabies immune globulin (RIG) that may be given in divided doses in separate sites, and
  - A 4-dose course of rabies vaccination given over a period of 14 days
  - Persons with a weakened immune system may need an additional (5th) dose and should talk to their doctor before getting vaccinated

- For patients who have previously received PEP or pre-exposure vaccination, PEP only includes a 2-dose course of rabies vaccination given on two days, as described below.

How should rabies PEP be administered?

- For patients who have not been previously vaccinated against rabies, PEP should be administered as follows:
  - RIG should be infiltrated in and around all bite wounds (if anatomically feasible), with any excess injected in a muscle distant from where vaccine is injected. The actual volume of RIG is based on the patient's weight, with 20 IU/kg being the recommended dosage. This means a 150 lb-person should receive 9 mL of RIG in total. RIG should be administered early, ideally when the vaccine series is initiated, but may be given up to 7 days after the first dose of vaccine is administered.

  - Rabies vaccine should be injected in 1-mL doses, in the deltoid (upper arm), on days 0, 3, 7, and 14. It is important to adhere to this schedule. "Day 0" represents the date that the vaccine series is started. Only one dose should be administered on each of these days. Vaccine should not be administered into the buttocks or in the same part of the body as RIG.

- For patients who have been previously vaccinated against rabies, PEP should be administered as follows:
  - Rabies vaccine should be injected in 1-mL doses, in the deltoid (upper arm), on days 0 and 3 only. No RIG should be given.

For more information about rabies, contact your healthcare provider or your local health department, or visit: http://ideha.dhmh.maryland.gov/OIDEOR/CZVBD/SitePages/rabies.aspx

This guide is provided as a courtesy from the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene