

Epi Update for Friday, September 9, 2022

CENTER FOR ACUTE DISEASE EPIDEMIOLOGY (CADE)
BUREAU OF HIV, STD, AND HEPATITIS

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Items for this week's Epi Update include

- **Enhanced barrier precaution use to prevent Multidrug-Resistant Organism (MDRO) transmission**
- **Rabies consultations regarding possible bat exposures increasing**
- **Rabies post-exposure rabies prophylaxis – it's not too late!**
- **Infographic: Rabies exposure management for bat-related incidents**
- **Meeting announcements and training opportunities**

Enhanced barrier precaution use to prevent Multidrug-Resistant Organism (MDRO) transmission

Multidrug-resistant organism (MDRO) transmission is common in nursing homes (skilled nursing facilities), contributing to substantial resident morbidity and mortality and increased healthcare costs. In July 2022 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released updated guidelines for the implementation of Enhanced Barrier Precautions (EBPs) in nursing homes. EBPs are an infection control intervention designed to reduce transmission of resistant organisms that employs targeted gown and glove use during high contact resident care activities in nursing homes and may be indicated when contact precautions do not otherwise apply.

The use of EBPs is intended for the nursing home setting only. The use of EBPs is not intended in the hospital setting, outpatient setting, long-term acute care hospitals, correctional facilities, schools, or other congregate housing settings.

The CDC has developed resources and educational materials on the EBPs to help with the adoption and implementation of the new guidelines. For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/hai/containment/PPE-Nursing-Homes.html>.

Rabies consultations regarding possible bat exposures increasing

The number of rabies consultation calls for potential exposures to bats increases each year around this time. Most commonly the calls are in regards to bats found inside a home. A person is considered potentially exposed to a bat if they have direct contact with the bat or if they are in the same room as the bat and cannot be sure they weren't bitten. If an individual believes themselves or others have been exposed, the bat should be captured in a safe manner and in a way that does not damage the bat's head.

There are two laboratories in Iowa that perform rabies testing: the Iowa State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory and the State Hygienic Laboratory at the University of Iowa (SHL). Some guidelines to follow when capturing a bat to submit for testing are provided below:

- If the bat is presumed dead, always take caution in the case the bat is merely stunned.
- Take care to not crush the skull. A damaged brain may render the specimen unsatisfactory for testing.

- If the bat is alive, guard yourself from any potential bite as you place the bat into a hard-sided container. Take the animal to your local vet to have it euthanized and shipped for testing. If you want to avoid fees associated with veterinarian euthanasia and shipment, you can hand deliver the live bat to the State Hygienic Laboratory, and SHL will euthanize and test the bat at no cost.

Additional specimen submission guidelines for each laboratory are available at:

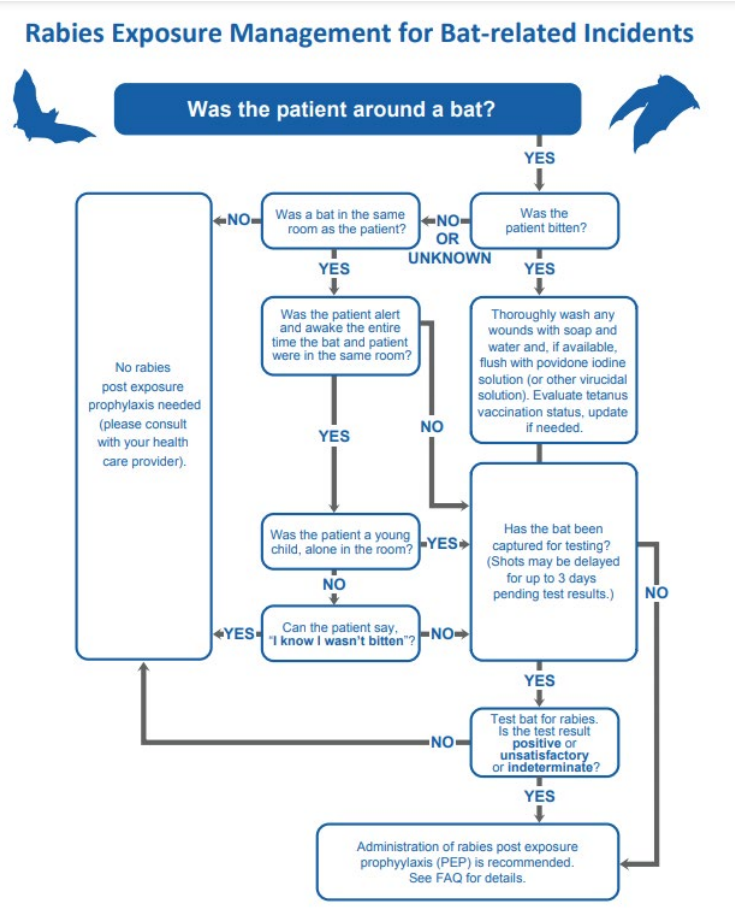
- Iowa State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory: <https://vetmed.iastate.edu/vdl/submissions/guidelines/rabies>
- State Hygienic Laboratory (SHL): <http://www.shl.uiowa.edu/kitsquotesforms/rabiescollectioninstructions.pdf>

CADE is available for consultation regarding potential rabies exposures 24/7. Call 515-242-5935 during business hours or 515-323-4360 outside of business hours.

Rabies post-exposure rabies prophylaxis – it’s not too late!

A common misconception heard during rabies consultations is that too much time has passed to give post exposure prophylaxis (PEP). The incubation period for rabies in humans is highly variable. It is usually 3-8 weeks, but can be as long as several years. Patients presenting months or even years following a potential exposure should be handled exactly the same as someone who was just exposed. PEP should generally be started as soon as possible following an exposure unless the animal is being tested or quarantined.

Infographic: Rabies exposure management for bat-related incidents



To view in full size, visit: <https://idph.iowa.gov/rabies/resources>.

Meeting announcements and training opportunities

SHL and Iowa HHS will deliver a two-part webinar series on Legionella on Tuesday, September 6 from 3-4 PM and Tuesday, September 20 from 3-4 PM. The intended audience are laboratorians, infection preventionists, and local health care officials. Part 1 will discuss the epidemiology and testing used to identify Legionella in humans. Part 2 will highlight how environmental testing combined and whole genome sequencing can be used to reduce health care acquired Legionella infections. P.A.C.E. credit will be provided. To register, visit https://uiowa.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cvGn245UNGssah0

Have a healthy and happy week!

Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology

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