



## **HEALTH ALERT UPDATE #1**

August 29, 2008

### **RABIES VACCINE SUPPLY SHORTAGE**

#### **ACTIONS REQUESTED OF CLINICIANS:**

1. Perform risk assessment for persons presenting with potential rabies exposure in order to ensure that limited vaccine is given to those who truly need post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).
2. Review attached documents titled "**Reported Animal Rabies by County and Species, California**". They provide information on species tested and found to be positive for rabies in this and other jurisdictions over the past 11 years.
3. Utilize the attached algorithm titled "**General Guidelines for Prophylaxis against Rabies in the United States**"
4. Report promptly to Animal Control to ensure, where possible, that exposing animals are captured, observed, and/or tested. If the animal is in custody, the results of animal quarantine or testing should inform whether prophylaxis is necessary.
5. Contact the **Acute Communicable Disease Unit (ACD) at (510) 267-3250 (daytime) or (925) 422-7595 (after-hours and weekends)** to report a known or possible exposure to a bat or other possibly rabid animals, to discuss indications for rabies PEP *and* to obtain the confirmation code to order **Imovax** vaccine for PEP from Sanofi Pasteur.

Please have the following information available:

- (a) Provider name, facility name, phone and fax numbers, as well as phone number for ordering pharmacy
- (b) Patient's name, age, address, phone number;
- (c) Details of exposure, including: bites/wounds; location of bites/wound(s), geographic location of incident, and date of exposure;
- (d) Animal details, including: What kind of animal? Is animal known? Has animal been captured? If dead, is the animal's carcass in custody? If so, where?
- (e) Is there a history of person having previous receipt of rabies vaccine? If so, date, and number of doses.

#### **SITUATION UPDATE #1:**

As of today, the mechanism for obtaining vaccine and from which company has changed:

- (1) Novartis has stopped accepting new orders for post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) effective close of business on August 28, 2008
- (2) Effective immediately, Novartis will only fill orders for RabAvert under the following circumstances:
  - (a) PEP after bites from laboratory-confirmed cases of rabid animals
  - (b) Emergency requests due to severe adverse events from PEP with Imovax (HDCV). These requests must go through CDC first for approval.
- (3) Until further notice, **all other requests for vaccine for post-exposure prophylaxis will be referred to Sanofi Pasteur**. The process to obtain the confirmation code is as follows:
  - (a) Call the Alameda County Public Health Department at the numbers indicated above.
  - (b) Have the information available concerning the exposure.
  - (c) Following discussion of relevant information and risk assessment, if we are in agreement with the need for PEP, the current confirmation code will be given to the provider to facilitate the order of vaccine for the patient.
  - (d) Sanofi requires the provider to complete their ordering form (as attached)

Given the changes that have and may continue to occur concerning this situation, Alameda County's website [www.acphd.org](http://www.acphd.org) will be updated regularly with new information and links to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website.

Finally, in an attempt to bring us all to a better understanding of the process of risk assessment for rabies exposure, **Dr. Benjamin Sun of the California Department of Public Health has kindly agreed to give a presentation at the Alameda**

**County Public Health Department (1000 Broadway, Suite 500 (Rooms 5000A and B) in Oakland) from 11:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. on Tuesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>.** We invite each hospital to send a maximum of **4** persons to this presentation, titled: “Fine-Tuning Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis”.

Persons seeking **pre-exposure prophylaxis**, e.g. laboratory staff, animal control officers, veterinary staff, and wildlife workers, will require approval from the state and the CDC. To initiate requests for pre-exposure prophylaxis, please contact Dr. Ben Sun at [ben.sun@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:ben.sun@cdph.ca.gov)

This situation is difficult and challenging for all of us. Your patience and cooperation is very much appreciated.

#### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- For a copy of ACPHD’s original Health Alert on the rabies vaccine shortage and more information on Reported Animal Rabies in Alameda County and General Guidelines for Prophylaxis for Rabies in the United States, please visit ACPHD’s Health Alert webpage at <http://www.acphd.org/AXBYCZ/Admin/Publications/ACPHDHealthAlert.htm>.
- For more detailed information on the interruption in the supply of rabies vaccine, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/news/2008-08-15\\_RabVaxupdate.html](http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/news/2008-08-15_RabVaxupdate.html).
- For more information on prophylaxis against rabies, see article entitled “Prophylaxis against Rabies” in the New England Journal of Medicine 351:25, pp.2626-2635, December 16, 2004.
- For information on rabies data and surveillance in California, please visit the California Department of Public Health website at <http://ww2.cdph.ca.gov/HEALTHINFO/DISCOND/Pages/rabies.aspx>.
- For information on human rabies prevention, please see recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices in ‘Human Rabies Prevention – United States, 2008’ at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr57e507.pdf>.
- For information on rabies in general, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <http://www.cdc.gov/rabies/>.

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**Health ALERT:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health ADVISORY:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health UPDATE:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.