



UK Health
Security
Agency

Introduction to the Rabies and Immunoglobulins Service

Overview

- Who we are and what we do
 - What is rabies? How do you get it? Why is it important?
- Rabies post exposure treatment
 - What information we will need
 - What treatment we are likely to recommend
- Rabies pre-exposure vaccination
 - For volunteer bat handlers
- How to contact us & resources
- Acknowledgements

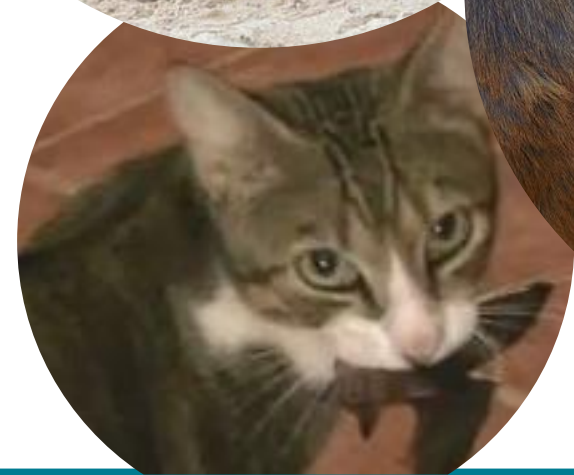
Who we are and what we do

Rabies and Immunoglobulins Service (RIGS)

- Telephone helpline for health professionals only
- National service for England (alternative arrangements in DAs)
- Offers support to help risk assess patients who may have been exposed to rabies
- We will help draw up a care plan, and ensure the correct treatment products are delivered to you
- Clinical advice delivered by Nurse Specialists with business and medical support

What is rabies? And how do you get it?

- An acute viral encephalomyelitis caused by infection with classic rabies virus or number of related Lyssaviruses
- Spread to people through infected saliva via bites, scratches or mucous membrane contamination from rabid animals (in particular dogs)
- Domestic dog = single most important reservoir (responsible for > 99% rabies deaths)
- All mammals appear susceptible – major reservoirs carnivores (dogs, foxes, racoons, skunks etc) and bats



Why is rabies important?

- Highest case-fatality rate of any infectious disease
- Kills an estimated 59,000 people per year
- Although effective post-exposure treatment (PET) is available, once clinical symptoms develop rabies is almost invariably fatal



What information you will need:

Exposure

Date of exposure

Country

Animal

Type of exposure, was skin broken

Body part exposed

Circumstances

→ **RAG** rating

Patient

Immunosuppression, clotting disorders & allergies

Previous rabies immunisation

Previous rabies exposures & treatment

Weight (if HRlg indicated)

Treatment

Was any immunoglobulin (HRlg) given? How was it administered?

Were any vaccines given?

DATES!

Brand names if possible

What treatment are we likely to recommend?

Human Rabies Immunoglobulin (HRIG)

Made from pooled plasma of immunised donors (blood product)

Reserved for the highest risk exposures

Not given to:

- Previously immunised
- If treatment with vaccines started >7 days ago
- If 2 doses vaccine already received

Dosage is weight dependant (20iu/kg)

Infiltrated at the site of the wound

Rabies Vaccine

Inactivated vaccine (Rabipur)

Globally most rabies vaccines are compatible

Mainstay of rabies post-exposure treatment

IM into deltoid

UK Schedule:

(unimmunised) 4 doses D0, D3, D7, D21(+/- HRIG)

(immunised) 2 doses D0, D3-7

(immunosuppressed) 5 doses D0, D3, D7, D14 & D28-30 (+HRIG and serology)

What treatment are we likely to recommend? (cont.)

Country or animal risk	Category 1 exposure	Category 2 exposure	Category 3 exposure
No risk	Green	Green	Green
Low risk	Green	Amber	Amber
High risk	Green	Amber	Red
Confirmed rabies	Green or amber	Red	Red

	Post-exposure treatment		
Composite rabies risk	Non immunised/ partially immunised	Fully immunised	Immunosuppressed
Green	None	None	None
Amber	4 doses of vaccine d0, d3, d7, d21	2 doses of vaccine d0, d3-7	HRIG and 5 doses of vaccine d0, d3, d7, d14 and d30
Red	HRIG* and 4 doses of vaccine d0, d3, d7, and d21	2 doses of vaccine d0, d3-7	HRIG and 5 doses of vaccine d0, d3, d7, d14 and d30

* HRIG not required for partially immunised patients (unless immunosuppressed)

Rabies pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)

- For travel → NaTHNaC
- For occupational health (even if voluntary) → organisational OH providers
- RIGS will provide PrEP free of charge for voluntary bat handlers who have completed their training, handle bats regularly and for whom no employer can be identified
- GP surgery is responsible for reading the guidelines and confirming eligibility
- Form to be completed and returned to RIGS by email for processing
- UK Schedule D0, D7, D28 plus booster at 1 year then every 3-5 years if still handling bats



How to contact us

Post-exposure treatment (PET)

By telephone on **0330 128 1020**

7/7 service 9am-5pm

Aim to get patients started on treatment same-day or next-day

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rabies-post-exposure-prophylaxis-management-guidelines>

Pre-exposure immunisation for volunteer bat handlers

Email completed request form to ig.clerks@nhs.net

Aim to respond to request within 2 weeks

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rabies-pre-exposure-prophylaxis-guidelines>

Further resources

Rabies risk in terrestrial mammals by country

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rabies-risks-by-country/rabies-risks-in-terrestrial-animals-by-country#primates-and-rodents>

Green Book Rabies chapter

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rabies-the-green-book-chapter-27>

Further guidance about rabies post-exposure treatment, risk assessment and management:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/rabies-risk-assessment-post-exposure-treatment-management>

Guidance about the administration of rabies post-exposure treatment:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rabies-administration-of-vaccine-and-immunoglobulin>

Leaflets about rabies risks for travellers, or from bats in the UK, are available to download and print at

<https://www.healthpublications.gov.uk/ArticleSearch.html?sp=St-178&sp=Sreset>

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