

410 IAC 1-2.3-52 Animal bites; specific control measures

Authority: IC 16-19-3-4; IC 16-41-2-1

Affected: IC 15-17-6-11; IC 16-41-2; IC 16-41-9

Sec. 52. (a) The specific control measures for animal bites are as follows:

(1) Every case of a human bitten by a domestic or wild mammal shall be reported within twenty-four (24) hours to the local health officer having jurisdiction. If a physician is in attendance, the physician shall report the bite. It shall be the duty of the local health officer to report information concerning the bite on the prescribed form. The report shall include requested information on postexposure rabies prophylaxis if it is being administered to the bite victim. Each reported bite shall be investigated immediately by the local health officer. This investigation shall be conducted with the purpose of determining the need for postexposure rabies prophylaxis of the bite victim and either:

(A) imposing a ten (10) day observation period on the biting animal (dog, cat, or ferret only) to determine if the animal was capable of transmitting rabies at the time of the biting incident; or

(B) submission of the head, if the biting animal is a potential rabies vector, to the department laboratory to determine if it was infected with rabies.

(2) Isolation of persons is not necessary.

(3) Concurrent disinfection is not necessary.

(4) Quarantine shall be applied as follows:

(A) Any apparently healthy dog, cat, or ferret that has bitten a person, or any dog, cat, or ferret suspected of being rabid shall be confined and held in observation for the period specified in IC 15-17-6-11 (not less than ten (10) days) or humanely killed at once for laboratory examination. The confinement shall be:

(i) under the supervision of the state veterinarian or a licensed, accredited veterinarian, or other person designated by the official quarantining the animal; and

(ii) at the expense of the owner.

(B) Any illness in the confined dog, cat, or ferret shall be reported immediately to the local health department. Animals under confinement shall not be immunized against rabies during the observation period. The head of any such dog, cat, or ferret that dies during the period of observation, or is killed subsequent to having bitten a person or another animal, shall be:

(i) removed;

(ii) packed in an iced container, but not frozen; and

(iii) forwarded immediately to the laboratory of the department for rabies testing.

(C) Any stray, unwanted, or unhealthy dog, cat, or ferret that has bitten a person shall be humanely killed immediately for laboratory examination. The animal's owner shall be responsible for having the unwanted or unhealthy animal euthanized, head removed, and shipped to the department for rabies examination. In the case of a stray animal or an animal whose owner cannot be found, the local health department shall assume this responsibility.

(D) Any potentially rabid wild mammal that has bitten a human or a domestic animal, or is suspected of being rabid, shall not be placed under observation, but shall be humanely killed at once in a manner that does not cause trauma to the head or brain. The head shall be refrigerated, but not frozen, and submitted within forty-eight (48) hours to the laboratory of the department. Wild mammals include, but are not limited to, the following:

(i) Wild animals kept as pets.

(ii) Wild mammals crossbred to domestic dogs and cats.

(E) The bite victim shall be notified after:

(i) a dog, cat, or ferret has passed the ten (10) day observation period in a healthy state; or

(ii) the results of a laboratory test are available.