

Rabies

How to assess animal bites OR concerns about rabies exposure

Step 1. Treat wound and administer tetanus vaccination, if required.¹

Step 2. Assess risk for rabies exposure.

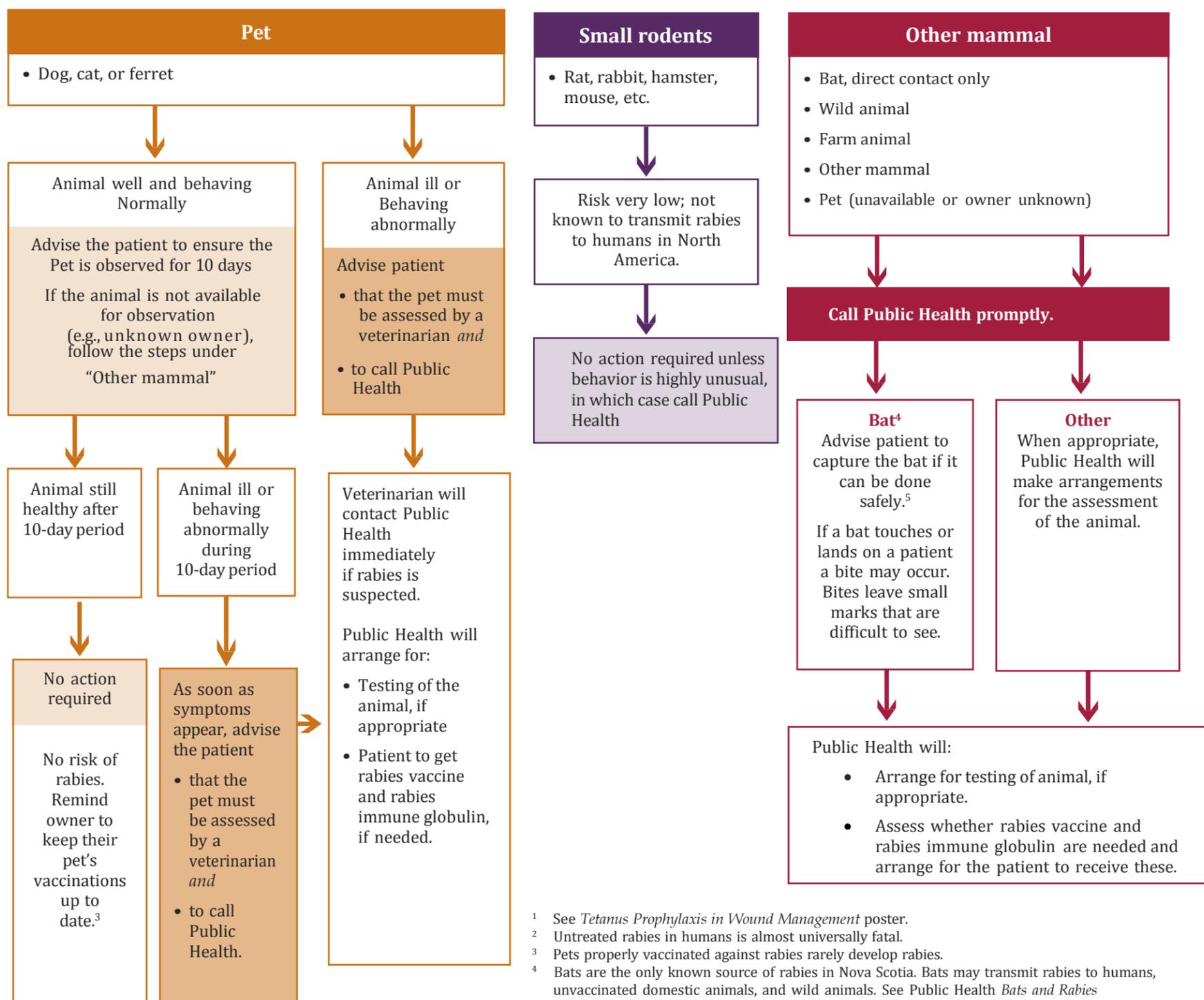
- Was patient exposed to mammal's saliva or central nervous system material via:
 - bite through skin?
 - mucous membranes?
 - non-intact skin?
- Did a bat land on or touch the patient?

If answer is **YES** to any one of these, go to **Step 3**.²

If answer is **NO** to both scenarios, no further action required.

Exposure to a mammal's blood, urine, feces, or a skunk's spray does not pose a risk of exposure to rabies.

Step 3. Assess action required.



¹ See *Tetanus Prophylaxis in Wound Management* poster.

² Untreated rabies in humans is almost universally fatal.

³ Pets properly vaccinated against rabies rarely develop rabies.

⁴ Bats are the only known source of rabies in Nova Scotia. Bats may transmit rabies to humans, unvaccinated domestic animals, and wild animals. See Public Health *Bats and Rabies* pamphlet.

⁵ The *Bats and Rabies* pamphlet outlines how to safely capture a bat.

If the patient is uncomfortable with contacting a pet owner, contact Public Health.

If there is uncertainty about direct contact with a bat, contact Public Health.

If you have further questions about assessing animal bites or administering Rabies Immune Globulin:

Call Public Health during regular business hours; if after hours, wait until next business day.

For **URGENT AFTER-HOURS CASES**, call the on-call Medical Officer of Health through QEII Locating at 902-473-2222.

Public Health:

WESTERN ZONE
Annapolis Valley
 Tel: 902-542-6310
 Fax: 902-542-4429
South Shore
 Tel: 902-543-0850
 Fax: 902-527-4208
South West
 Tel: 902-742-7141
 Fax: 902-742-3083

NORTHERN ZONE
Colchester-East Hants
 Tel: 902-893-5820
 Fax: 902-893-2614
Cumberland
 Tel: 902-667-3319
 Fax: 902-893-2614
Pictou
 Tel: 902-752-5151
 Fax: 902-893-2614

EASTERN ZONE
Cape Breton
 Tel: 902-563-2400
 Fax: 902-563-2005
Guysborough and Antigonish
 Tel: 902-867-4500 Ext 4800
 Fax: 902-863-5111

CENTRAL ZONE
Halifax
 Tel: 902-481-5800
 Fax: 902-481-5889

