

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.

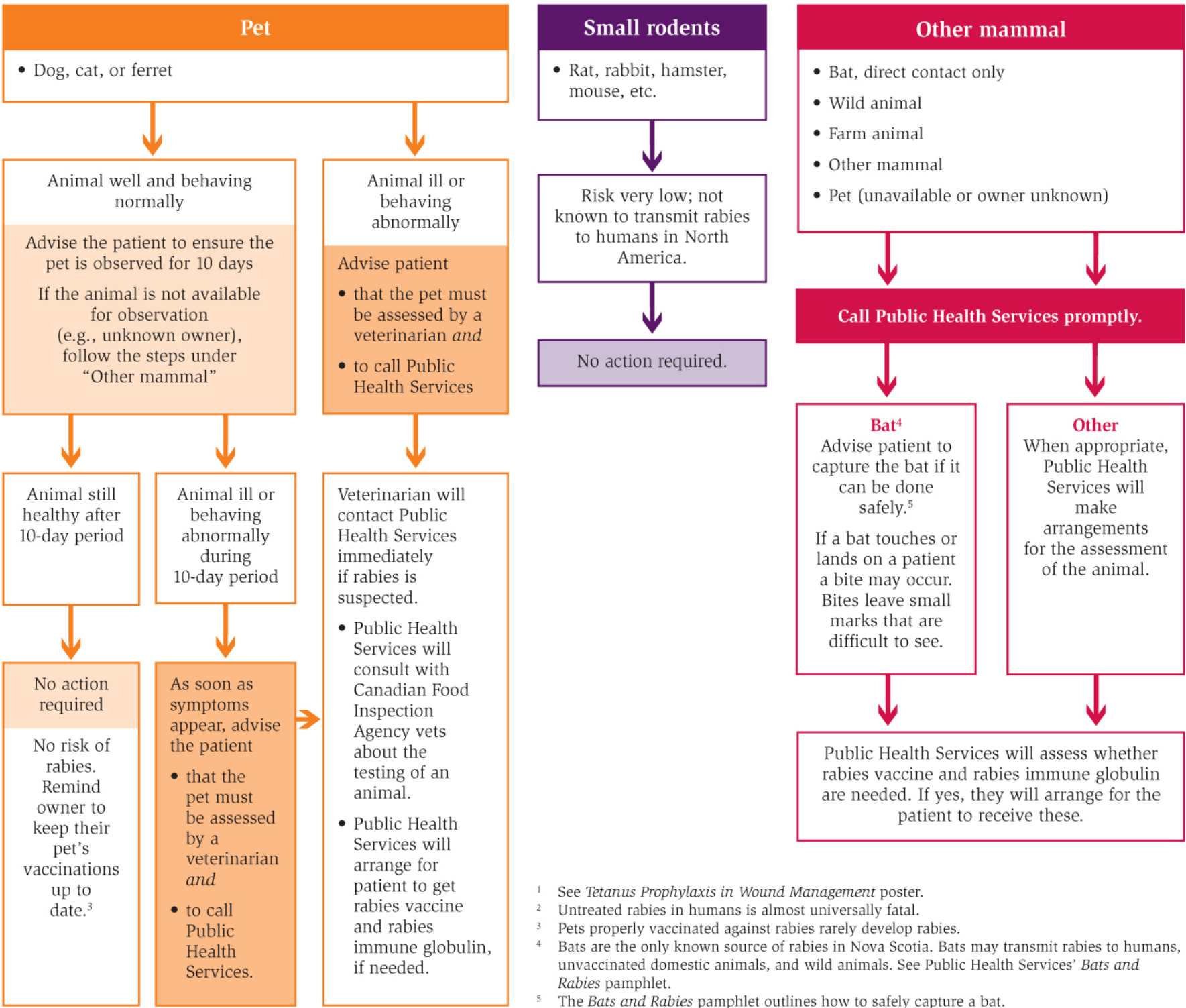
- Was patient exposed to mammal’s saliva or central nervous system material via:
 - bite through skin?
 - mucous membranes?
 - non-intact skin?
- Did a bat land on or touch the patient?

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 Services’ *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 Services.

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

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

Call Public Health Services 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 473-2222.

Public Health Services

South Shore Health Bridgewater Tel: 543-0850 Fax: 543-8024	South West Health Yarmouth Tel: 742-7141 Fax: 742-6062	Annapolis Valley Health Wolfville Tel: 542-6310 Fax: 542-6333	Colchester East Hants Health Authority Truro Tel: 893-5820 Fax: 893-2614	Cumberland Health Authority Amherst Tel: 667-3319 Fax: 893-2614
Pictou County Health Authority New Glasgow Tel: 752-5151 Fax: 893-2614	Guysborough Antigonish Strait Health Authority Antigonish Tel: 867-4500 ext. 4800 Fax: 863-5111	Cape Breton District Health Authority Sydney Tel: 563-2400 Fax: 563-2005	Capital Health Dartmouth Tel: 481-5800 Fax: 481-5889	

