

**Appendix 3 Patient Information Leaflet  
Rabies Post Exposure Information Leaflet**

**You have been started on Rabies Post Exposure Treatment (Prophylaxis).**

Following assessment at \_\_\_\_\_ (location) on \_\_\_\_\_  
(date) your treatment plan and vaccination schedule is as follows:

Immunoglobulin given?            Yes / No        (delete as appropriate)

**You will need to have \_\_\_\_\_ doses of rabies vaccine**

Vaccine 1 due date \_\_\_\_\_

Vaccine 2 due date \_\_\_\_\_

Vaccine 3 due date \_\_\_\_\_

Vaccine 4 due date \_\_\_\_\_

**You do/do not (delete as appropriate) need a further dose of vaccination in hospital (if required out of hours or weekends only)**

**If Yes, please attend \_\_\_\_\_ (location)**

**on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)**

**at \_\_\_\_\_ (time)**

**You will be contacted by the Immunisation Coordination Team on the next working day to arrange your vaccine appointments. If you have not heard anything by 12 noon that day, please phone:**

**01292 513351 (option 2)**

If you have any questions or concerns over the next 28 days please contact the Health Protection Team in Public Health on 01292 885858 .

In cases of emergency, please contact 999.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is rabies post exposure prophylaxis?

Post-exposure prophylaxis generally involves a course of four rabies vaccines given over 21 days. For those at higher risk, a medicine called immunoglobulin is also given – this is injected into and around the bite or scratch.

If you have had a full course of pre-exposure vaccines, you will usually only need two additional rabies vaccines after a bite or scratch and will not usually need immunoglobulin.

Remember to take your record of vaccinations with you so that the doctor can ensure you get the right treatment. For people with a weakened immune system, the post-exposure treatment needed may be slightly different and your doctor or nurse will advise you after speaking with a specialist.

### What is Rabies?

In the UK, the risk of rabies is generally very low. Rabies is a rare but very serious infection of the brain and nerves. Rabies is spread to people by contact with saliva from an infected wild or domestic animal, usually through a bite, scratch or a lick to broken skin.

Rabies is found throughout the world, particularly in Asia, Africa, and parts of Central and South America. Dogs are the cause of most rabies infections in people. However, all animals can catch rabies and pass it on, including cats, monkeys and bats.

Rabies is prevented by a course of vaccines given promptly after an exposure to animal saliva (post-exposure prophylaxis). Travellers at higher risk of rabies exposure may also choose to have vaccines before a potential exposure, but post-exposure prophylaxis is still necessary.

### What should I do if I develop any symptoms after I have been exposed?

If you develop any symptoms of rabies in the 28 days from exposure, you should seek medical advice immediately. Tell your doctor that you have been started on rabies post exposure prophylaxis or have recently completed rabies post exposure prophylaxis and you have developed some symptoms you are worried about.

Without treatment, symptoms of rabies can take between 3 and 12 weeks to appear but they can appear after a few days.

Early symptoms can include:

- a headache
- high temperature (fever)
- weakness or feeling generally unwell
- pain, numbness or tingling where you've been bitten or scratched

Symptoms will usually get worse and can include:

- muscle spasms
- having hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't there)
- confusion

If you have any questions, please contact the Health Protection Team on 01292 885858.

Further information can be found at [Rabies | NHS inform](#)