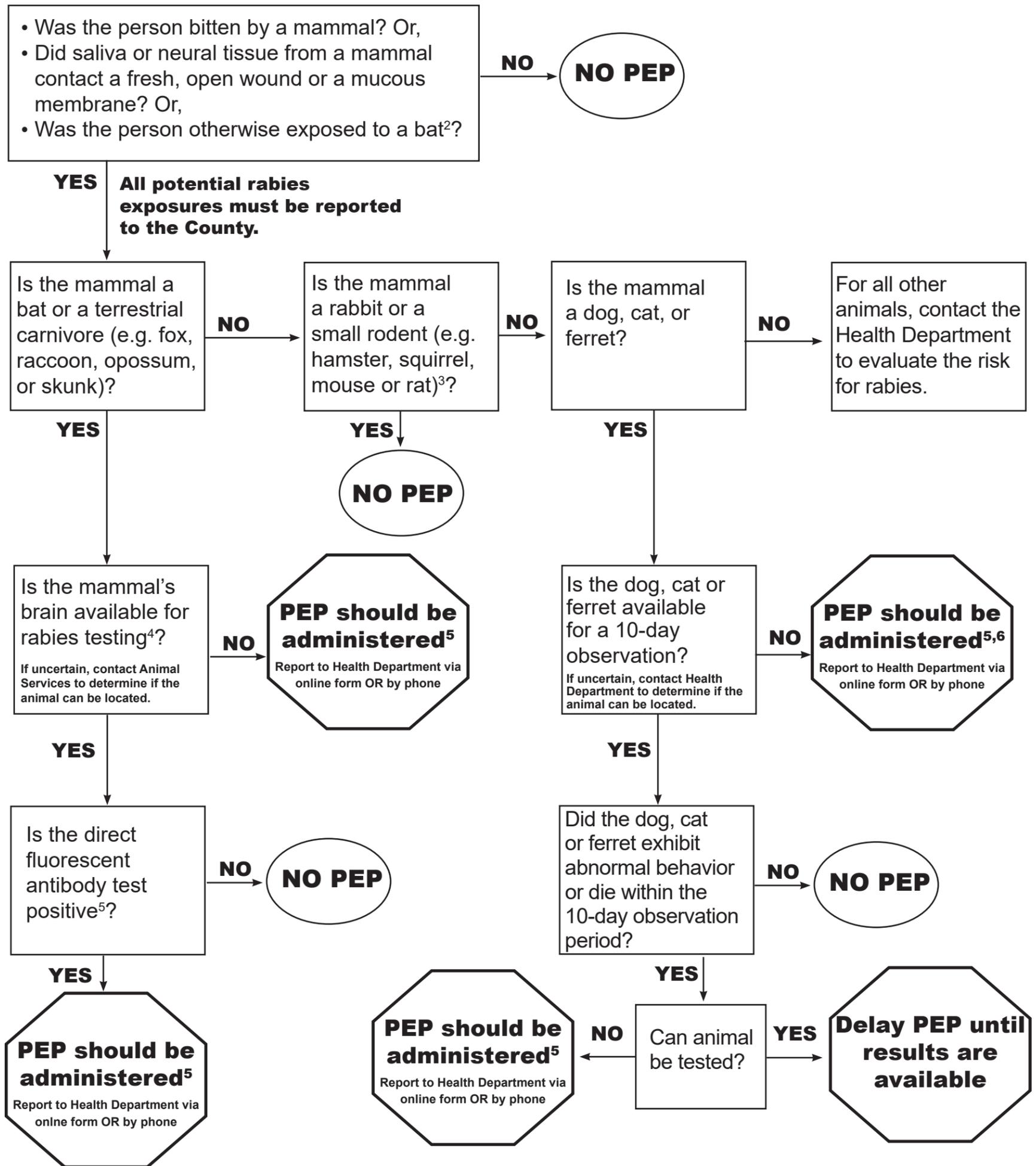




# A Guide for Physicians: Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) Protocol<sup>1</sup>



- This algorithm only addresses rabies PEP. Other treatment such as wound care, antibiotics and tetanus immunization may be indicated.
- Bat exposures include the following: a bat bite, direct contact with a bat where a bite cannot be ruled out (e.g. bat in hair), or a person awakens to find a bat in the same room or an adult witnesses a bat in a room with a previously unattended child, mentally disabled person, or intoxicated individual.
- Rodents and rabbits are not considered at-risk species for rabies barring unusual circumstances (abnormal behavior or showing signs of illness). For assistance with evaluating unusual circumstances involving rodents or rabbits, consult the Health Department at 703-246-6004 or 571-274-2296.
- In most situations, initiation of PEP can be delayed pending rabies testing of the animal. However, the severity and location of a wound (severe wounds or obvious wounds on head and neck should be given highest priority) and the expected interval between the time of the exposure and the expected receipt of the rabies test result should be considered when making a decision to begin PEP.

- Unless the person was previously vaccinated against rabies or is immunosuppressed, PEP consists of four doses of vaccine (day 0, 3, 7, 14) and one dose (day 0) of human rabies immunoglobulin (HRIG). Immunosuppressed individuals should receive four doses of vaccine as indicated above plus one additional dose of vaccine on day 28. Individuals with a history of prior rabies vaccination should receive two doses of vaccine (day 0 and day 3) and HRIG should NOT be administered. Contact the Health Department at 703-246-6004 or 571-274-2296 for assistance, if needed. Reporting of PEP administration to the Health Department is required by state law.
- If the animal is located and tests negative for rabies, or can be appropriately observed for 10 days, PEP may be discontinued.

online reporting form: <https://redcap.vdh.virginia.gov/redcap/surveys/?s=RFJ9XF9NJE>

**Fairfax County Health Department:**  
703-246-6004 or 571-274-2296  
TTY 711

**Fairfax County Animal Services:**  
703-691-2131 TTY 711