Rabies, Possible Exposure

Merlin disease code: 07101 Rabies, Possible Exposure

**Background**

A rabies exposure is considered any bite, scratch, or other contact in which saliva or nervous tissue of a suspect or known rabid animal enters an open or fresh wound, or comes in contact with mucous membranes by entering the eye, mouth, or nose of another animal or person.

**Clinical criteria for case classification**

Not applicable.

**Laboratory criteria for case classification**

Not applicable.

**Epidemiological criteria for case classification**

Not applicable.

**Case classification**

**Confirmed:**
Bite or other significant exposure of a human by a confirmed or suspected rabid animal, including non-human primates.

**Criteria to distinguish a new case from previous reports**

Not applicable.

**Comments**

Only bites or other exposures where rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) is recommended should be reported as rabies, possible exposure (Merlin disease code: 07101). Do not report animal bites where PEP is not recommended. However, please report the following exceptions: if PEP is not recommended but the patient still requests to receive PEP, and if you are unable to determine whether PEP was recommended for a particular case. For these exceptions, please use the Case Notes in Merlin to explain the particular situation.

All *monkey* bites, including those where PEP is not recommended, should be reported as herpes B virus, possible exposure (Merlin disease code: 07103).

The Rabies Prevention and Control in Florida Guidebook is updated annually and should be considered the most up-to-date resource for rabies related questions. To locate the guidebooks, please visit the following website: [www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html](http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html).

Page 34 includes the definition and interpretation of what constitutes a rabies exposure. Page 35 includes information regarding risk assessment of potential exposures. Page 37 provides a patient management chart with a bulleted summary.