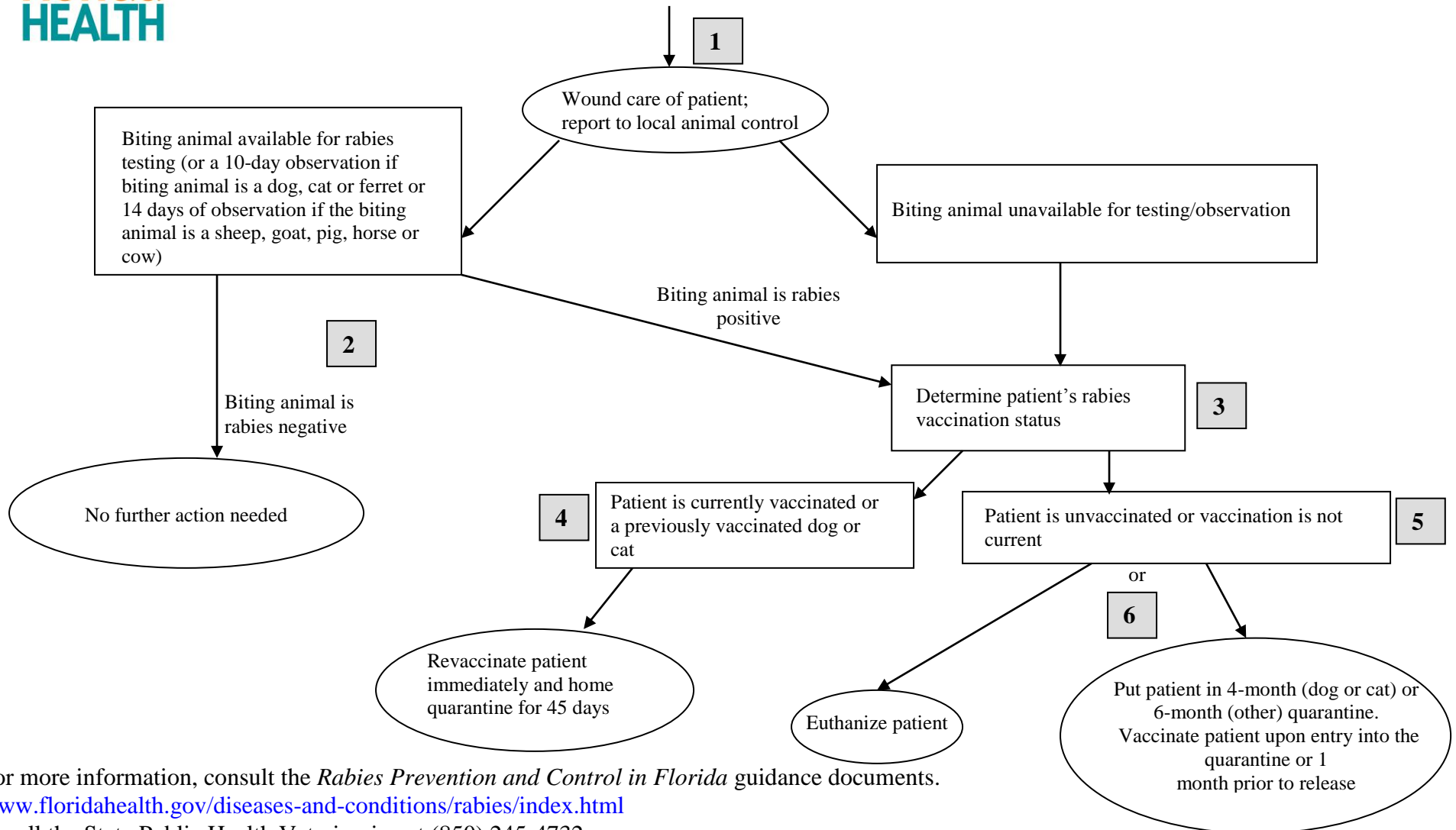


# Management of Animal Patients Exposed to Known or Potentially Rabid Animals; Public Health Guidelines for Florida Veterinarians



**Patient (dog, cat, ferret, horse, cattle or sheep) bitten by (or otherwise exposed to) second potentially rabid animal (“biting animal”)**



For more information, consult the *Rabies Prevention and Control in Florida* guidance documents.  
[www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html](http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html)  
 or call the State Public Health Veterinarian at (850) 245-4732

## **Management of Animal Patients Exposed to Known or Potentially Rabid Animals; Public Health Guidelines for Florida Veterinarians**

1. Note: Some counties do not have an animal control program. Others may only have limited animal control services and may not be able to assist you with receiving animal-to-animal bite reports. Contact your local animal control staff or Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission staff to assist in capturing the “biting” animal if appropriate. No definitive observation periods exist for mammals other than dogs, cats and ferrets. Livestock, if apparently healthy, may be confined and observed for clinical signs compatible with rabies at the discretion of the county health department.
2. For guidelines on shipping samples to Florida Department of Health laboratories for rabies testing, consult the *Rabies Prevention and Control in Florida* documents.
3. The duration of immunity is determined by the rabies vaccine used, either one year or multiple years. Place and details of quarantine are determined by the county health department or animal control designee.
4. “Previously vaccinated dogs and cats” are animals that have had one or more rabies vaccination by a licensed veterinarian but are not currently vaccinated per the vaccine label.
5. Animals NOT meeting the definition of “currently vaccinated” or “previously vaccinated” for the management of animal patients exposed to known or potentially rabid animals include:
  - a. Dog, cat, ferret, horse, cattle, or sheep whose first vaccination was given less than one month before exposure.
  - b. Ferret, horse, cattle, or sheep whose previous vaccination expired.
  - c. Dog, cat, ferret, horse, cattle, or sheep vaccinated by anyone other than a licensed veterinarian.
  - d. Any wild animal, or wild and domestic animal crosses.
6. For unvaccinated animals, if quarantine is selected over euthanasia, the animal must, under most circumstances, be kept in strict confinement at a veterinary clinic or animal control facility. Home quarantine is at the discretion of the county health department.

For more information, consult the *Rabies Prevention and Control in Florida* webpage:  
[www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html](http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/rabies/index.html)