



Livingston County Health Department Communicable Disease Update

Dianne McCormick, RS, MSA
Director/Health Officer

Donald W. Lawrenchuk, MD, MPH
Medical Director

ANIMAL BITES

Now that summer is upon us, animal bite reports are on the rise. Questions often arise regarding rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP), and LCHD staff are available 24 hours a day, seven days per week to provide guidelines. If you are calling after normal business hours you will need to dial (517) 546-9111. In general, a healthy domestic dog, cat, or ferret that bites a person should be confined at the owner's residence and observed for ten days. Any illness in the animal during the confinement period should be evaluated by a veterinarian and reported immediately to LCHD. If the biting animal is stray or unwanted, it should either be confined and observed for ten days or be euthanized immediately and submitted for rabies examination. Wild animals, such as skunks, raccoons, foxes, and bats that bite humans should be euthanized and tested for rabies as soon as possible. Potentially exposed persons can normally afford to wait for 1) an animal to be located for quarantine or testing as soon as possible, or 2) animal rabies testing results. Decisions to start rabies PEP should be based on the type of exposure and the animal involved, as well as laboratory and epidemiologic information.

Rabies is transmitted only when the virus is introduced into a bite wound, open cuts in skin, or onto mucous membranes such as the mouth or eyes. Other factors to consider when evaluating a potential rabies exposure include the natural occurrence in the area, the biting animal's history and current health status (e.g., abnormal behavior, signs of illness), and the potential for the animal to be exposed to rabies.

A currently vaccinated dog, cat, or ferret is unlikely to be infected with rabies. You should consider if the bite was from a provoked or unprovoked attack. Bites inflicted on a person attempting to feed or handle an apparently healthy animal should be regarded as provoked. If it was an unprovoked attack, that's more likely to indicate that the animal may be rabid.

Rabies post exposure prophylaxis consists of a dose of human rabies immune globulin and rabies vaccine given on the day of the exposure, and then a dose of vaccine given again on days 3, 7, and 14. If the patient is immunosuppressed they would need an additional dose of vaccine on day 28.

What to do if you find a bat in your home? Do NOT release it if you find it in the room of:

- A sleeping person
- Someone mentally impaired
- An intoxicated individual
- An unattended child

To learn how to safely capture a bat, visit www.lchd.org under Quick Links.

MEASLES VACCINATION BEFORE INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Measles remains a common disease in many parts of the world, including areas in Europe, Asia, the Pacific and Africa. In the United States, most of the measles cases result from international travel. The disease is brought into the United States by unvaccinated people who get infected in other countries. They spread measles to others, which can cause outbreaks. Anyone who is not fully protected against measles is at risk of getting infected when they travel internationally.

Before international travel, the CDC recommends:

- Infants 6 months through 11 months of age should receive one dose of MMR vaccine
- Children 12 months of age and older should receive two doses of MMR vaccine separated by at least 28 days
- Teenagers and adults who do not have evidence of immunity against measles should get two doses of MMR vaccine separated by at least 28 days

Acceptable presumptive evidence of immunity against measles includes at least one of the following:

- Written documentation of adequate vaccination,
- Laboratory evidence of immunity,
- Laboratory confirmation of measles, or
- Birth in the United States before 1957.

THE POWER TO PREVENT CANCER IS IN YOUR HANDS

HPV vaccination increases 5-fold in August at the peak of back-to-school appointments. It's time to put as many young people as possible on the path to lifelong prevention of HPV-related diseases and cancers. The National HPV Vaccination Roundtable has launched the *You've Got the Power to Prevent Cancer!* campaign. The campaign is intended to encourage medical providers to flex their super powers and prevent HPV cancers.

We hope that physicians in Michigan will stay strong and push for HPV vaccination during "vaccination season." The back-to-school wellness visits and the Michigan High School Athletic Association sports physicals are the best time to start young people on a path to lifetime protection against HPV-related diseases and cancers. We encourage you and your staff to visit the website to get "10 Powerful Ways to Prevent Cancer Through HPV Vaccination." <https://www.powertopreventcancer.org/> and flex *your* cancer fighting super power! Don't forget to order immunization materials, free of charge, from the Healthy Michigan Clearinghouse at www.healthymichigan.com (click "enter site" and "immunizations"). HPV materials are available in the teen packet (IM135) as well as items IM121-IM126 and IM137.

BECOME A MICHIGAN INFLUENZA SENTINEL PROVIDER

Medical providers of any specialty in nearly any setting who are likely to see patients with influenza-like illness can be sentinel providers. Some advantages are: free respiratory virus cultures; weekly feedback on submitted data; and regional, state, and national influenza data. For information about becoming a sentinel provider please contact MDHHS at (517) 335-3385.

Call LCHD at (517) 546-9850 to report or consult about a communicable disease. We are available 24/7. If it is after business hours, call 911 and they will contact the appropriate staff.