



HEALTH ALERT NETWORK BROADCAST

MESSAGE ID: 08102017 13:45

FROM: CO-CDPHE

SUBJECT: HAN Advisory - Rabies risk: CSU students exposed to bats

RECIPIENTS: LPHA ONLY

RECIPIENT INSTRUCTIONS: Please distribute to Health Care Providers in your area as necessary. This information is for the public and health care community.

HEALTH ADVISORY | Rabies risk: CSU students exposed to bats | Aug. 10, 2017

Health care providers: Please distribute widely in your office.

This information is for the public health and health care community.

Key points

- A group of CSU students and faculty stayed in a bat-infested facility in Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming between May 19 and July 4, 2017.
- It is unknown if any bats in the facility had rabies.
- Rabies risk assessments are being conducted for students and faculty who stayed at the facility.
- Public health officials will refer exposed individuals to health care for rabies post-exposure prophylaxis if indicated.
- Individuals who report to health care indicating they stayed in a lodge or cabin with bats and have been recommended by public health to receive rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) should receive the full course of treatment.

Background information

On August 2, 2017, the Wyoming Department of Health and the National Park Service (NPS) were notified of a group of people who stayed in lodges on a ranch in Grand Teton National Park. This group reported seeing many bats and bat excrement in the lodges. Through further investigation it was found that numerous college groups stayed in these cabins throughout the summer while bats were present. A total of 40 CSU students who stayed in the cabins between May 19 and July 4, 2017, will be contacted for rabies risk assessments. If any additional individuals are found to have been exposed, public health officials will contact them directly.

Rabies is an infectious viral disease found in most of the world, including the United States. Bats are the most common source of rabies in the United States and can transmit the disease through a bite or scratch. Cases have occurred when a person was bitten or scratched by a bat while sleeping. Rabies is almost always fatal once symptoms have started, but can be prevented through post-exposure prophylaxis. Given the extent of bat activity that was reported in this situation, the Wyoming State Health Department and the NPS, in consultation with the CDC, determined that

individuals who had stayed in these lodges throughout the season should be assessed for potential bat exposure and rabies risk so that recommendations about rabies post-exposure prophylaxis could be made. At this time, at least 150 people from multiple states are thought to have slept in these lodges.

Recommendations / guidance

Individuals who report to health care indicating they stayed in a lodge or cabin with bats and have been recommended to receive rabies post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) by public health should receive the full course of treatment. PEP should be initiated as soon as possible. Rabies has a very long incubation period. The average is 3-12 weeks, but longer incubation periods have been reported. Prophylaxis is effective as long as the exposed person is not yet symptomatic for rabies and may be given weeks or months after exposure. Providers should follow the guidance available at <https://goo.gl/INrGOs>. This information was created using ACIP recommendations available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5902a1.htm>.

In Colorado, animal bites to humans by dogs, cats, bats, skunks, foxes, raccoons, coyotes, and other wild carnivores, must be reported to the local or state health department within 24 hours. In addition to bites, proximity exposure to bats is also reportable. Local public health agencies will conduct risk assessments on patients bitten by these animals to determine the need for animal testing or rabies PEP. Rabies reservoir species (bats, skunks, raccoons and foxes) can be tested to see if they had rabies at the time of the bite. Cats, dogs and ferrets should be placed on a 10-day bite hold after the bite occurs. The local animal control agency can assist with this.

For more information

For additional information on rabies, including the most up-to-date case count, visit:

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/rabies-data>

If a patient presents to your facility and you have questions about rabies exposures or treatment recommendations please call CDPHE at **303-692-2700** during business hours or **303-370-9395** after normal business hours.

