



Public Health
1601 E. Fourth Plain Blvd.
P. O. Box 9825
Vancouver, WA 98666-8825

7/20/2011

Dear Patient,

This letter has important information about rabies due to bites from **dogs, cats, and ferrets**.

Rabies is rare in the United States but almost always deadly without prompt treatment. Dog, cat and ferret bites that occur in Washington State are low risk for rabies in most situations. You are at higher risk for developing rabies from a dog, cat, or ferret bite if any of the following occurred:

- You were bitten while traveling in a foreign country.
- The animal that bit you was brought from another country in the past 6 months.
- The animal that bit you had known contact with a bat or with other wild animals like raccoons, coyotes, foxes, or skunks.
- The animal that bit you appeared ill and was not acting normally.

If any of these above conditions apply to your bite situation, or you have questions, please call Clark County Public Health at 360-397-8182.

Washington law requires that dogs, cats and ferrets must be observed for 10 days after biting someone. If the animal has rabies at the time of the bite, it will get sick and die within the 10 day observation period. Public Health will then test the animal. If the test is positive for rabies, the person bitten or scratched needs to begin rabies vaccinations immediately.

If you are the animal owner, follow these rules for the 10 days of observation:

- Restrict the animal so that it cannot escape.
 - Do not leave the dog, cat, or ferret loose or by itself in the yard.
 - Do not take the dog, cat or ferret off your property
- Do not let the animal have contact with people or with other animals (pets or wild).
- Observe the dog, cat, or ferret daily for signs of illness.
- Do not vaccinate the dog, cat, or ferret for rabies during the 10 days.
- Vaccinate the animal after the 10th day if its rabies shots are not up-to-date.*
- Do not sell, destroy or get rid of the animal.
- If dog, cat, or ferret gets sick, acts strangely, or dies within the 10 days of observation, immediately contact your veterinarian and also contact Clark County Public Health at 360-397-8182.

If you are unable to observe your own dog, cat or ferret for the 10 days or if the animal that bit or scratched you does not belong to your family, contact animal control at following numbers:

- Clark County Animal Control: 360-397-2488 (bites in City of Vancouver and unincorporated areas)
- Battle Ground - (360) 342-5100
- Camas/Washougal - (360) 335-0432
- La Center - (360) 263-2745
- Ridgefield - (360) 887-3556
- Yacolt - (360) 686-3922